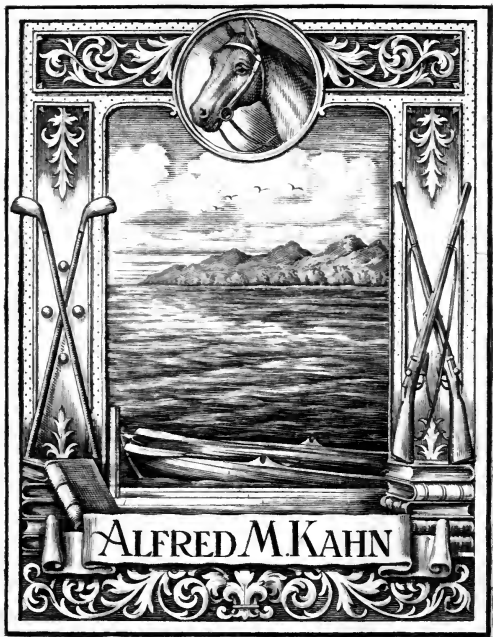




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WALT WHITMAN'S

DRUM - TAPS .

anderson

New-York.

1865.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Drum-Taps.....	5
Shut not your doors to me proud Libraries.....	8
Cavalry crossing a ford.....	8
Song of the Banner at Day-Break.....	9
By the bivouac's fitful flame.....	16
1861.....	17
From Paumanok starting I fly like a bird.....	18
Beginning my studies.....	18
The Centenarian's Story.....	19
Pioneers ! O Pioneers !.....	25
Quicksand years that whirl me I know not whither.....	30
The Dresser.....	31
When I heard the learn'd Astronomer.....	34
Rise O Days from your fathomless deeps.....	35
A child's amaze.....	37
Beat ! beat ! drums !.....	38
Come up from the fields, father.....	39
City of ships.....	41
Mother and babe.....	41
Vigil strange I kept on the field one night.....	42
Bathed in war's perfume.....	43
A march in the ranks hard-press'd, and the road unknown.....	44
Long, too long, O land.....	45
A sight in camp in the day-break grey and dim.....	46
A farm picture.....	46
Give me the splendid silent sun.....	47
Over the carnage rose prophetic a voice.....	49
Did you ask dulcet rhymes from me ?.....	50
Year of meteors.....	51
The Torch.....	52
Years of the unperform'd.....	53
Year that trembled and reel'd beneath me.....	54
The Veteran's vision.....	55
O tan-faced Prairie-boy.....	56

Camps of green.....	57
As toilsome I wander'd Virginia's woods.....	58
Hymn of dead soldiers.....	59
The ship.....	60
A Broadway pageant.....	61
Flag of stars, thick-sprinkled bunting.....	65
Old Ireland.....	66
Look down fair moon.....	66
Out of the rolling ocean, the crowd..	67
World, take good notice.....	67
I saw old General at bay.....	68
Others may praise what they like.....	68
Solid, ironical, rolling orb.....	68
Hush'd be the camps to-day.....	69
Weave in, weave in, my hardy soul.....	69
Turn, O Libertad.....	70
Bivouac on a mountain side.....	70
Pensive on her dead gazing, I heard the mother of all.....	71
Not youth pertains to me.....	72

DRUM-TAPS.

1 FIRST, O songs, for a prelude,
Lightly strike on the stretch'd tympanum, pride and joy
 in my city,
How she led the rest to arms — how she gave the cue,
How at once with lithe limbs, unawaiting a moment, she
 sprang ;
(O superb! O Manhattan, my own, my peerless!
O strongest you in the hour of danger, in crisis! O
 truer than steel!)
How you sprang! how you threw off the costumes of
 peace with indifferent hand ;
How your soft opera-music changed, and the drum and
 fife were heard in their stead ;
How you led to the war, (that shall serve for our pre-
 lude, songs of soldiers,)
How Manhattan drum-taps led.

2 Forty years had I in my city seen soldiers parading ;
Forty years as a pageant — till unawares, the Lady of
 this teeming and turbulent city,
Sleepless, amid her ships, her houses, her incalculable
 wealth,
With her million children around her — suddenly,
At dead of night, at news from the south,
Incens'd, struck with clench'd hand the pavement.

3 A shock electric — the night sustain'd it ;
Till with ominous hum, our hive at day-break, pour'd
 out its myriads.

4 From the houses then, and the workshops, and
 through all the doorways,
 Leapt they tumultuous — and lo! Manhattan arming.

5 To the drum-taps prompt,
 The young men falling in and arming ;
 The mechanics arming, (the trowel, the jack-plane, the
 blacksmith's hammer, tost aside with precipi-
 tation ;)

The lawyer leaving his office, and arming — the judge
 leaving the court ;

The driver deserting his wagon in the street, jumping
 down, throwing the reins abruptly down on the
 horses' backs ;

The salesman leaving the store — the boss, book-keeper,
 porter, all leaving ;

Squads gathering everywhere by common consent, and
 arming ;

The new recruits, even boys — the old men show them
 how to wear their accoutrements — they buckle
 the straps carefully ;

Outdoors arming — indoors arming — the flash of the
 musket-barrels ;

The white tents cluster in camps — the arm'd sentries
 around — the sunrise cannon, and again at sunset ;

Arm'd regiments arrive every day, pass through the
 city, and embark from the wharves ;

(How good they look, as they tramp down to the river,
 sweaty, with their guns on their shoulders !

How I love them! how I could hug them, with their
 brown faces, and their clothes and knapsacks cov-
 er'd with dust!)

The blood of the city up — arm'd! arm'd! the cry
 everywhere ;

The flags flung out from the steeples of churches, and
 from all the public buildings and stores ;

The tearful parting — the mother kisses her son — the
 son kisses his mother ;

(Loth is the mother to part — yet not a word does she
 speak to detain him ;)

The tumultuous escort — the ranks of policemen preceding,
clearing the way ;
The unpent enthusiasm — the wild cheers of the crowd
for their favorites ;
The artillery — the silent cannons, bright as gold, drawn
along, rumble lightly over the stones ;
(Silent cannons — soon to cease your silence !
Soon, unlimber'd, to begin the red business ;)
All the mutter of preparation — all the determin'd
arming ;
The hospital service — the lint, bandages, and medicines ;
The women volunteering for nurses — the work begun
for, in earnest — no mere parade now ;
War ! an arm'd race is advancing ! — the welcome for
battle — no turning away ;
War ! be it weeks, months, or years — an arm'd race is
advancing to welcome it.

6 Mannahatta a-march ! — and it's O to sing it well !
It's O for a manly life in the camp !

7 And the sturdy artillery !
The guns, bright as gold — the work for giants — to
serve well the guns :
Unlimber them ! no more, as the past forty years, for
salutes for courtesies merely ;
Put in something else now besides powder and wadding.

8 And you, Lady of Ships ! you Mannahatta !
Old matron of the city ! this proud, friendly, turbulent
city !
Often in peace and wealth you were pensive, or covertly
frown'd amid all your children ;
But now you smile with joy, exulting old Mannahatta !

SHUT NOT YOUR DOORS TO ME PROUD LIBRARIES.

SHUT not your doors to me, proud libraries,
 For that which was lacking among you all, yet needed
 most, I bring ;
 A book I have made for your dear sake, O soldiers,
 And for you, O soul of man, and you, love of comrades ;
 The words of my book nothing, the life of it every-
 thing ;
 A book separate, not link'd with the rest, nor felt by
 the intellect ;
 But you will feel every word, O Libertad ! arm'd
 Libertad !
 It shall pass by the intellect to swim the sea, the air,
 With joy with you, O soul of man.

CAVALRY CROSSING A FORD.

A LINE in long array, where they wind betwixt green
 islands ;
 They take a serpentine course — their arms flash in the
 sun — Hark to the musical clank ;
 Behold the silvery river — in it the splashing horses,
 loitering, stop to drink ;
 Behold the brown-faced men — each group, each person,
 a picture — the negligent rest on the saddles ;
 Some emerge on the opposite bank — others are just
 entering the ford ;
 The guidon flags flutter gaily in the wind.

SONG
OF
THE BANNER AT DAY-BREAK.

POET.

1 O A new song, a free song,
Flapping, flapping, flapping, flapping, by sounds, by
 voices clearer,

By the wind's voice and that of the drum,
By the banner's voice, and child's voice, and sea's voice,
 and father's voice,

Low on the ground and high in the air,
On the ground where father and child stand,
In the upward air where their eyes turn,
Where the banner at day-break is flapping.

2 Words! book-words! what are you?
Words no more, for hearken and see,
My song is there in the open air — and I must sing,
With the banner and pennant a-flapping.

3 I'll weave the chord and twine in,
Man's desire and babe's desire — I'll twine them in, I'll
 put in life;

I'll put the bayonet's flashing point — I'll let bullets and
 slugs whizz;

I'll pour the verse with streams of blood, full of volition,
 full of joy;

Then loosen, launch forth, to go and compete,
With the banner and pennant a-flapping.

BANNER AND PENNANT.

4 Come up here, bard, bard ;
 Come up here, soul, soul ;
 Come up here, dear little child,
 To fly in the clouds and winds with us, and play with
 the measureless light.

CHILD.

5 Father, what is that in the sky beckoning to me with
 long finger ?
 And what does it say to me all the while ?

FATHER.

6 Nothing, my babe, you see in the sky ;
 And nothing at all to you it says. But look you, my
 babe,
 Look at these dazzling things in the houses, and see you
 the money-shops opening ;
 And see you the vehicles preparing to crawl along the
 streets with goods :
 These ! ah, these ! how valued and toil'd for, these !
 How envied by all the earth !

POET.

7 Fresh and rosy red, the sun is mounting high ;
 On floats the sea in distant blue, careering through its
 channels ;
 On floats the wind over the breast of the sea, setting in
 toward land ;
 The great steady wind from west and west-by-south,
 Floating so buoyant, with milk-white foam on the waters.

8 But I am not the sea, nor the red sun ;
 I am not the wind, with girlish laughter ;
 Not the immense wind which strengthens — not the
 wind which lashes ;
 Not the spirit that ever lashes its own body to terror and
 death :

But I am of that which unseen comes and sings, sings,
 sings,
 Which babbles in brooks and scoots in showers on the
 land;
 Which the birds know in the woods, mornings and
 evenings,
 And the shore-sands know, and the hissing wave, and
 that banner and pennant,
 Aloft there flapping and flapping.

CHILD.

9 O father, it is alive — it is full of people — it has
 children!
 O now it seems to me it is talking to its children!
 I hear it — it talks to me — O it is wonderful!
 O it stretches — it spreads and runs so fast! O my
 father,
 It is so broad, it covers the whole sky!

FATHER.

10 Cease, cease, my foolish babe,
 What you are saying is sorrowful to me — much it dis-
 pleases me;
 Behold with the rest, again I say — behold not banners
 and pennants aloft;
 But the well-prepared pavements behold — and mark
 the solid-wall'd houses.

BANNER AND PENNANT.

11 Speak to the child, O bard, out of Manhattan;
 Speak to our children all, or north or south of Manhat-
 tan,
 Where our factory-engines hum, where our miners
 delve the ground,
 Where our hoarse Niagara rumbles, where our prairie-
 plows are plowing;
 Speak, O bard! point this day, leaving all the rest, to
 us over all — and yet we know not why;
 For what are we, mere strips of cloth, profiting nothing,
 Only flapping in the wind?

POET.

¹² I hear and see not strips of cloth alone ;
I hear the tramp of armies, I hear the challenging
sentry ;
I hear the jubilant shouts of millions of men — I hear
LIBERTY !
I hear the drums beat, and the trumpets blowing ;
I myself move abroad, swift-rising, flying then ;
I use the wings of the land-bird, and use the wings of
the sea-bird, and look down as from a height ;
I do not deny the precious results of peace — I see pop-
ulous cities, with wealth incalculable ;
I see numberless farms — I see the farmers working in
their fields or barns ;
I see mechanics working — I see buildings everywhere
founded, going up, or finish'd ;
I see trains of cars swiftly speeding along railroad
tracks, drawn by the locomotives ;
I see the stores, depots, of Boston, Baltimore, Charles-
ton, New Orleans ;
I see far in the west the immense area of grain — I
dwell awhile, hovering ;
I pass to the lumber forests of the north, and again
to the southern plantation, and again to Cali-
fornia ;
Sweeping the whole, I see the countless profit, the
busy gatherings, earned wages ;
See the identity formed out of thirty-six spacious and
haughty States, (and many more to come ;)
See forts on the shores of harbors — see ships sailing in
and out ;
Then over all, (aye ! aye !) my little and lengthen'd pen-
nant shaped like a sword,
Runs swiftly up, indicating war and defiance — And now
the halyards have rais'd it,
Side of my banner broad and blue — side of my starry
banner,
Discarding peace over all the sea and land.

BANNER AND PENNANT.

13 Yet louder, higher, stronger, bard! yet farther,
 wider cleave!
 No longer let our children deem us riches and peace
 alone;
 We can be terror and carnage also, and are so now;
 Not now are we one of these spacious and haughty
 States, (nor any five, nor ten;)
 Nor market nor depot are we, nor money-bank in the
 city;
 But these, and all, and the brown and spreading land,
 and the mines below, are ours;
 And the shores of the sea are ours, and the rivers great
 and small;
 And the fields they moisten are ours, and the crops and
 the fruits are ours;
 Bays and channels, and ships sailing in and out, are ours
 — and we over all,
 Over the area spread below, the three millions of square
 miles — the capitals,
 The thirty-five millions of people — O bard! in life and
 death supreme,
 We, even we, from this day flaunt out masterful, high
 up above,
 Not for the present alone, for a thousand years, chant-
 ing through you,
 This song to the soul of one poor little child.

CHILD.

14 O my father, I like not the houses;
 They will never to me be anything — nor do I like
 money;
 But to mount up there I would like, O father dear —
 that banner I like;
 That pennant I would be, and must be.

FATHER.

15 Child of mine, you fill me with anguish;
 To be that pennant would be too fearful;

Little you know what it is this day, and henceforth
forever ;

It is to gain nothing, but risk and defy everything ;
Forward to stand in front of wars — and O, such wars !
— what have you to do with them ?

With passions of demons, slaughter, premature death ?

POET.

16 Demons and death then I sing ;
Put in all, aye all, will I — sword-shaped pennant for
war, and banner so broad and blue,
And a pleasure new and extatic, and the prattled yearning
of children,
Blent with the sounds of the peaceful land, and the
liquid wash of the sea ;
And the icy cool of the far, far north, with rustling
cedars and pines ;
And the whirr of drums, and the sound of soldiers
marching, and the hot sun shining south ;
And the beach-waves combing over the beach on my
eastern shore, and my western shore the same ;
And all between those shores, and my ever running
Mississippi, with bends and chutes ;
And my Illinois fields, and my Kansas fields, and my
fields of Missouri ;
The CONTINENT — devoting the whole identity, without
reserving an atom,
Pour in ! whelm that which asks, which sings, with all,
and the yield of all.

BANNER AND PENNANT.

17 Aye all ! for ever, for all !
From sea to sea, north and south, east and west,
Fusing and holding, claiming, devouring the whole ;
No more with tender lip, nor musical labial sound,
But, out of the night emerging for good, our voice per-
suasive no more,
Croaking like crows here in the wind.

POET.

(Finale.)

18 My limbs, my veins dilate ;
 The blood of the world has fill'd me full — my theme is
 clear at last :
 — Banner so broad, advancing out of the night, I sing
 you haughty and resolute ;
 I burst through where I waited long, too long, deafen'd
 and blinded ;
 My sight, my hearing and tongue, are come to me, (a
 little child taught me ;)
 I hear from above, O pennant of war, your ironical call
 and demand ;
 Insensate ! insensate ! (yet I at any rate chant you,) O
 banner !
 Not houses of peace are you, nor any nor all their pros-
 perity, (if need be, you shall have every one of
 those houses to destroy them ;
 You thought not to destroy those valuable houses, stand-
 ing fast, full of comfort, built with money ;
 May they stand fast, then ? Not an hour, unless you,
 above them and all, stand fast ;)
 — O banner ! not money so precious are you, nor farm
 produce you, nor the material good nutriment,
 Nor excellent stores, nor landed on wharves from the
 ships ;
 Not the superb ships, with sail-power or steam-power,
 fetching and carrying cargoes,
 Nor machinery, vehicles, trade, nor revenues, — But
 you, as henceforth I see you,
 Running up out of the night, bringing your cluster of
 stars, (ever-enlarging stars ;)
 Divider of day-break you, cutting the air, touch'd by
 the sun, measuring the sky,
 (Passionately seen and yearn'd for by one poor little
 child,
 While others remain busy, or smartly talking, forever
 teaching thrift, thrift ;)
 O you up there ! O pennant ! where you undulate like
 a snake, hissing so curious,

Out of reach — an idea only — yet furiously fought for,
 risking bloody death — loved by me!
 So loved! O you banner leading the day, with stars
 brought from the night!
 Valueless, object of eyes, over all and demanding all —
 O banner and pennant!
 I too leave the rest — great as it is, it is nothing —
 houses, machines are nothing — I see them not;
 I see but you, O warlike pennant! O banner so broad,
 with stripes, I sing you only,
 Flapping up there in the wind.



BY THE BIVOUCAC'S FITFUL FLAME.



By the bivouac's fitful flame,
 A procession winding around me, solemn and sweet and
 slow; — but first I note,
 The tents of the sleeping army, the fields' and woods'
 dim outline,
 The darkness, lit by spots of kindled fire — the silence;
 Like a phantom far or near an occasional figure moving;
 The shrubs and trees, (as I left my eyes they seem to be
 stealthily watching me;)
 While wind in procession thoughts, O tender and
 wond'rous thoughts,
 Of life and death — of home and the past and loved,
 and of those that are far away;
 A solemn and slow procession there as I sit on the
 ground,
 By the bivouac's fitful flame.

1861.

ARM'D year! year of the struggle!
No dainty rhymes or sentimental love verses for you,
terrible year!
Not you as some pale poetling, seated at a desk, lisp-
ing cadenzas piano;
But as a strong man, erect, clothed in blue clothes,
advancing, carrying a rifle on your shoulder,
With well-gristled body and sunburnt face and hands—
with a knife in the belt at your side,
As I heard you shouting loud—your sonorous voice
ringing across the continent;
Your masculine voice, O year, as rising amid the great
cities,
Amid the men of Manhattan I saw you, as one of the
workmen, the dwellers in Manhattan;
Or with large steps crossing the prairies out of Illinois
and Indiana,
Rapidly crossing the West with springy gait, and de-
scending the Alleghanies;
Or down from the great lakes, or in Pennsylvania, or on
deck along the Ohio river;
Or southward along the Tennessee or Cumberland rivers,
or at Chattanooga on the mountain top,
Saw I your gait and saw I your sinewy limbs, clothed
in blue, bearing weapons, robust year;
Heard your determin'd voice, launch'd forth again and
again;
Year that suddenly sang by the mouths of the round
lipp'd cannon,
I repeat you, hurrying, crashing, sad, distracted year.

FROM PAUMANOK STARTING I FLY LIKE A BIRD.

FROM Paumanok starting, I fly like a bird,
 Around and around to soar, to sing the idea of all;
 To the north betaking myself, to sing there arctic songs,
 To Kanada, 'till I absorb Kanada in myself—to Michi-
 gan then,
 To Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, to sing their songs,
 (they are inimitable;)
 Then to Ohio and Indiana to sing theirs—to Missouri
 and Kansas and Arkansas to sing theirs,
 To Tennessee and Kentucky—to the Carolinas and
 Georgia, to sing theirs,
 To Texas, and so along up toward California, to roam
 accepted everywhere;
 To sing first, (to the tap of the war-drum, if need be,)
 The idea of all—of the western world, one and insepa-
 rable,
 And then the song of each member of These States.

BEGINNING MY STUDIES.

BEGINNING my studies, the first step pleas'd me so much,
 The mere fact, consciousness—these forms—the pow-
 er of motion,
 The least insect or animal—the senses—eyesight;
 The first step, I say, aw'd me and pleas'd me so much,
 I have never gone, and never wish'd to go, any farther,
 But stop and loiter all my life, to sing it in extatic songs.

THE CENTENARIAN'S STORY.



VOLUNTEER OF 1861,

(At Washington Park, Brooklyn, assisting the Centenarian.)

1 Give me your hand, old Revolutionary ;
The hill-top is nigh — but a few steps, (make room,
gentlemen ;)
Up the path you have follow'd me well, spite of your
hundred and extra years ;
You can walk, old man, though your eyes are almost
done ;
Your faculties serve you, and presently I must have
them serve me.

2 Rest, while I tell what the crowd around us means ;
On the plain below, recruits are drilling and exercising ;
There is the camp — one regiment departs to morrow ;
Do you hear the officers giving the orders ?
Do you hear the clank of the muskets ?

3 Why, what comes over you now, old man ?
Why do you tremble, and clutch my hand so convul-
sively ?
The troops are but drilling — they are yet surrounded
with smiles ;
Around them at hand, the well drest friends and the
women ;
While splendid and warm the afternoon sun shines
down ;

Green the midsummer verdure, and fresh blows the dallying breeze,
O'er proud and peaceful cities, and arm of the sea between.

4 But drill and parade are over — they march back to quarters;
Only hear that approval of hands! hear what a clapping!

5 As wending, the crowds now part and disperse — but we, old man,
Not for nothing have I brought you hither — we must remain;
You to speak in your turn, and I to listen and tell.

THE CENTENARIAN.

6 When I clutch'd your hand, it was not with terror;
But suddenly, pouring about me here, on every side,
And below there where the boys were drilling, and up the slopes they ran,
And where tents are pitch'd, and wherever you see, south and south-east and south-west,
Over hills, across lowlands, and in the skirts of woods,
And along the shores, in mire (now fill'd over,) came again, and suddenly raged,
As eighty-five years a-gone, no mere parade receiv'd with applause of friends,
But a battle, which I took part in myself — aye, long ago as it is, I took part in it,
Walking then this hill-top, this same ground.

7 Aye, this is the ground;
My blind eyes, even as I speak, behold it re-peopled from graves:
The years recede, pavements and stately houses disappear:

Rude forts appear again, the old hoop'd guns are mounted;

I see the lines of rais'd earth stretching from river to bay;

I mark the vista of waters, I mark the uplands and slopes:

Here we lay encamp'd — it was this time in summer also.

8 As I talk, I remember all — I remember the Declaration:

It was read here — the whole army paraded — it was read to us here;

By his staff surrounded, the general stood in the middle — he held up his unsheath'd sword,

It glitter'd in the sun in full sight of the army.

9 'Twas a bold act then;

The English war ships had just arrived — the king had sent them from over the sea;

We could watch down the lower bay where they lay at anchor,

And the transports, swarming with soldiers.

10 A few days more, and they landed — and then the battle.

11 Twenty thousand were brought against us,

A veteran force, furnish'd with good artillery.

12 I tell not now the whole of the battle;

But one brigade, early in the forenoon, order'd forward to engage the red-coats;

Of that brigade I tell, and how steadily it march'd,

And how long and how well it stood, confronting death.

13 Who do you think that was, marching steadily, sternly confronting death?

It was the brigade of the youngest men, two thousand strong,

Rais'd in Virginia and Maryland, and many of them
known personally to the General.

14 Jauntily forward they went with quick step toward
Gowanus' waters ;
Till of a sudden, unlook'd for, by defiles through the
woods, gain'd at night,
The British advancing, wedging in from the east,
fiercely playing their guns,
That brigade of the youngest was cut off, and at the
enemy's mercy.

15 The General watch'd them from this hill ;
They made repeated desperate attempts to burst their
environment ;
Then drew close together, very compact, their flag
flying in the middle ;
But O from the hills how the cannon were thinning and
thinning them !

16 It sickens me yet, that slaughter !
I saw the moisture gather in drops on the face of the
General ;
I saw how he wrung his hands in anguish.

17 Meanwhile the British maneuver'd to draw us out
for a pitch'd battle ;
But we dared not trust the chances of a pitch'd battle.

18 We fought the fight in detachments ;
Sallying forth, we fought at several points — but in each
the luck was against us ;
Our foe advancing, steadily getting the best of it, push'd
us back to the works on this hill ;
Till we turn'd menacing, here, and then he left us.

19 That was the going out of the brigade of the young-
est men, two thousand strong ;
Few return'd — nearly all remain in Brooklyn.

20 That, and here, my General's first battle ;
 No women looking on, nor sunshine to bask in — it
 did not conclude with applause ;
 Nobody clapp'd hands here then.

21 But in darkness, in mist, on the ground, under a
 chill rain,
 Wearied that night we lay, foil'd and sullen ;
 While scornfully laugh'd many an arrogant lord, off
 against us encamp'd,
 Quite within hearing, feasting, klinking wine-glasses
 together over their victory.

22 So, dull and damp and another day ;
 But the night of that, mist lifting, rain ceasing,
 Silent as a ghost, while they thought they were sure of
 him, my General retreated.

23 I saw him at the river-side,
 Down by the ferry, lit by torches, hastening the embar-
 cation ;
 My General waited till the soldiers and wounded were
 all pass'd over ;
 And then, (it was just ere sunrise,) these eyes rested on
 him for the last time.

24 Every one else seem'd fill'd with gloom ;
 Many no doubt thought of capitulation.

25 But when my General pass'd me,
 As he stood in his boat, and look'd toward the coming
 sun,
 I saw something different from capitulation.

TERMINUS.

26 Enough — the Centenarian's story ends ;
 The two, the past and present, have interchanged ;
 I myse'f, as connecter, as chansonnier of a great future,
 am now speaking.

27 And is this the ground Washington trod ?
 And these waters I listlessly daily cross, are these the
 waters he cross'd,
 As resolute in defeat, as other generals in their proudest
 triumphs ?

28 It is well — a lesson like that, always comes good ;
 I must copy the story, and send it eastward and west-
 ward ;
 I must preserve that look, as it beam'd on you, rivers of
 Brooklyn.

29 See ! as the annual round returns, the phantoms
 return ;
 It is the 27th of August, and the British have landed ;
 The battle begins, and goes against us—behold ! through
 the smoke Washington's face ;
 The brigade of Virginia and Maryland have march'd
 forth to intercept the enemy ;
 They are cut off—murderous artillery from the hills
 plays upon them ;
 Rank after rank falls, while over them silently droops
 the flag,
 Baptized that day in many a young man's bloody
 wounds,
 In death, defeat, and sisters', mothers' tears.

30 Ah, hills and slopes of Brooklyn ! I perceive you
 are more valuable than your owners supposed ;
 Ah, river ! henceforth you will be illumin'd to me at
 sunrise with something besides the sun.

31 Encampments new ! in the midst of you stands an
 encampment very old ;
 Stands forever the camp of the dead brigade.

PIONEERS !

O PIONEERS !

1

COME, my tan-faced children,
Follow well in order, get your weapons ready ;
Have you your pistols? have you your sharp edged
axes?

Pioneers! O pioneers!

2

For we cannot tarry here,
We must march my darlings, we must bear the brunt of
danger,

We, the youthful sinewy races, all the rest on us depend,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

3

O you youths, western youths,
So impatient, full of action, full of manly pride and
friendship,

Plain I see you, western youths, see you tramping with
the foremost,

Pioneers! O pioneers!

4

Have the elder races halted?
Do they droop and end their lesson, wearied, over there
beyond the seas?

We take up the task eternal, and the burden, and the
lesson,

Pioneers! O pioneers!

c

5

All the past we leave behind;
 We debouch upon a newer, mightier world, varied
 world;
 Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labor and
 the march,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

6

We detachments steady throwing,
 Down the edges, through the passes, up the mountains
 steep,
 Conquering, holding, daring, venturing, as we go, the
 unknown ways,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

7

We primeval forests felling,
 We the rivers stemming, vexing we, and piercing deep
 the mines within;
 We the surface broad surveying, and the virgin soil up-
 heaving,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

8

Colorado men are we,
 From the peaks gigantic, from the great sierras and the
 high plateaus,
 From the mine and from the gully, from the hunting
 trail we come,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

9

From Nebraska, from Arkansas,
 Central inland race are we, from Missouri, with the con-
 tinental blood intervein'd;
 All the hands of comrades clasping, all the Southern, all
 the Northern,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

10

O resistless, restless race!
 O beloved race in all! O my breast aches with tender
 love for all!
 O I mourn and yet exult — I am rapt with love for all,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

11

Raise the mighty mother mistress,
 Waving high the delicate mistress, over all the starry
 mistress, (bend your heads all,)
 Raise the fang'd and warlike mistress, stern, impassive,
 weapon'd mistress,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

12

See, my children, resolute children,
 By those swarms upon our rear, we must never yield or
 falter,
 Ages back in ghostly millions, frowning there behind us
 urging,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

13

On and on, the compact ranks,
 With accessions ever waiting, with the places of the
 dead quickly fill'd,
 Through the battle, through defeat, moving yet and
 never stopping,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

14

O to die advancing on!
 Are there some of us to droop and die? has the hour
 come?
 Then upon the march we fittest die, soon and sure the
 gap is fill'd,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

15

All the pulses of the world,
 Falling in, they beat for us, with the western movement
 beat;
 Holding single or together, steady moving, to the front,
 all for us,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

16

Life's involv'd and varied pageants,
 All the forms and shows, all the workmen at their
 work,
 All the seamen and the landsmen, all the masters with
 their slaves,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

17

All the hapless silent lovers,
 All the prisoners in the prisons, all the righteous and
 the wicked,
 All the joyous, all the sorrowing, all the living, all the
 dying,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

18

I too with my soul and body,
 We, a curious trio, picking, wandering on our way,
 Through these shores, amid the shadows, with the
 apparitions pressing,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

19

Lo! the darting bowling orb!
 Lo! the brother orbs around! all the clustering suns and
 planets;
 All the dazzling days, all the mystic nights with dreams,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

20

These are of us, they are with us,
 All for primal needed work, while the followers there in
 embryo wait behind,
 We to-day's procession heading, we the route for travel
 clearing,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

21

O you daughters of the west!
 O you young and elder daughters! O you mothers and
 you wives!
 Never must you be divided, in our ranks you move
 united,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

22

Minstrels latent on the prairies!
 (Shrouded bards of other lands! you may sleep — you
 have done your work ;)
 Soon I hear you coming warbling, soon you rise and
 tramp amid us,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

23

Not for delectations sweet;
 Not the cushion and the slipper, not the peaceful and
 the studious;
 Not the riches safe and palling, not for us the tame en-
 joyment,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

24

Do the feasters gluttonous feast?
 Do the corpulent sleepers sleep? have they lock'd and
 bolted doors?
 Still be ours the diet hard, and the blanket on the
 ground,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

C*

25

Has the night descended?
 Was the road of late so toilsome? did we stop discour-
 aged, nodding on our way?
 Yet a passing hour I yield you, in your tracks to pause
 oblivious,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!

26

Till with sound of trumpet,
 Far, far off the day-break call — hark! how loud and
 clear I hear it wind;
 Swift! to the head of the army! — swift! spring to
 your places,
 Pioneers! O pioneers!



QUICKSAND YEARS THAT WHIRL ME
 I KNOW NOT WHITHER.



QUICKSAND years that whirl me I know not whither,
 Your schemes, politics, fail — lines give way — substan-
 ces mock and elude me;
 Only the theme I sing, the great and strong-possess'd
 soul, eludes not;
 One's-self, must never give way — that is the final sub-
 stance — that out of all is sure;
 Out of politics, triumphs, battles, death — what at last
 finally remains?
 When shows break up, what but One's-Self is sure?

THE DRESSER.

1 AN old man bending, I come, among new faces,
Years looking backward, resuming, in answer to children,

Come tell us old man, as from young men and maidens
that love me ;

Years hence of these scenes, of these furious passions,
these chances,

Of unsurpass'd heroes, (was one side so brave? the
other was equally brave ;)

Now be witness again — paint the mightiest armies of
earth ;

Of those armies so rapid, so wondrous, what saw you to
tell us ?

What stays with you latest and deepest? of curious
panics,

Of hard-fought engagements, or sieges tremendous,
what deepest remains ?

2 O maidens and young men I love, and that love me,
What you ask of my days, those the strangest and sudden
your talking recalls :

Soldier alert I arrive, after a long march, cover'd with
sweat and dust ;

In the nick of time I come, plunge in the fight, loudly
shout in the rush of successful charge ;

Enter the captur'd works yet lo! like a swift-
running river, they fade ;

Pass and are gone, they fade — I dwell not on soldiers'
perils or soldiers' joys ;

(Both I remember well — many the hardships, few the
joys, yet I was content.)

3 But in silence, in dream's projections,
 While the world of gain and appearance and mirth goes
 on,
 So soon what is over forgotten, and waves wash the
 imprints off the sand,
 In nature's reverie sad, with hinged knees returning, I
 enter the doors — (while for you up there,
 Whoever you are, follow me without noise, and be of
 strong heart.)

4 Bearing the bandages, water and sponge,
 Straight and swift to my wounded I go,
 Where they lie on the ground, after the battle brought
 in ;
 Where their priceless blood reddens the grass, the
 ground ;
 Or to the rows of the hospital tent, or under the roof'd
 hospital ;
 To the long rows of cots, up and down, each side, I
 return ;
 To each and all, one after another, I draw near — not
 one do I miss ;
 An attendant follows, holding a tray — he carries a
 refuse pail,
 Soon to be fill'd with clotted rags and blood, emptied,
 and fill'd again.

5 I onward go, I stop,
 With hinged knees and steady hand, to dress wounds ;
 I am firm with each — the pangs are sharp, yet unavoi-
 dable ;
 One turns to me his appealing eyes — (poor boy ! I
 never knew you,
 Yet I think I could not refuse this moment to die for
 you, if that would save you.)

6 On, on I go — (open, doors of time ! open, hospital
 doors !)

The crush'd head I dress, (poor crazed hand, tear not the
bandage away ;)

The neck of the cavalry-man, with the bullet through
and through, I examine ;

Hard the breathing rattles, quite glazed already the eye,
yet life struggles hard ;

(Come, sweet death ! be persuaded, O beautiful death !
In mercy come quickly.)

7 From the stump of the arm, the amputated hand,
I undo the clotted lint, remove the slough, wash off the
matter and blood ;

Back on his pillow the soldier bends, with curv'd neck,
and side-falling head ;

His eyes are closed, his face is pale, he dares not look on
the bloody stump,

And has not yet looked on it.

8 I dress a wound in the side, deep, deep ;
But a day or two more — for see, the frame all wasted
and sinking,
And the yellow-blue countenance see.

9 I dress the perforated shoulder, the foot with the bul-
let wound,
Cleanse the one with a gnawing and putrid gangrene, so
sickenning, so offensive,
While the attendant stands behind aside me, holding
the tray and pail.

10 I am faithful, I do not give out ;
The fractur'd thigh, the knee, the wound in the abdo-
men,
These and more I dress with impassive hand — (yet
deep in my breast a fire, a burning flame.)

11 Thus in silence, in dream's projections,
Returning, resuming, I thread my way through the hos-
pitals ;

The hurt and the wounded I pacify with soothing hand,
 I sit by the restless all the dark night — some are so
 young ;
 Some suffer so much — I recall the experience sweet
 and sad ;
 (Many a soldier's loving arms about this neck have
 cross'd and rested,
 Many a soldier's kiss dwells on these bearded lips.)



WHEN I HEARD THE LEARN'D ASTRONOMER.



WHEN I heard the learn'd astronomer ;
 When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns
 before me ;
 When I was shown the charts and the diagrams, to add,
 divide, and measure them ;
 When I, sitting, heard the astronomer, where he
 lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,
 How soon, unaccountable, I became tired and sick ;
 Till rising and gliding out, I wander'd off by myself,
 In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
 Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.

RISE O DAYS FROM YOUR FATH-
OMLESS DEEPS.

1

RISE, O days, from your fathomless deeps, till you loftier
and fiercer sweep!
Long for my soul, hungering gymnastic, I devour'd—
what the earth gave me;
Long I roam'd the woods of the north — long I watch'd
Niagara pouring;
I travel'd the prairies over, and slept on their breast — I
cross'd the Nevadas, I cross'd the plateaus;
I ascended the towering rocks along the Pacific, I sail'd
out to sea;
I sail'd through the storm, I was refresh'd by the storm;
I watch'd with joy the threatening maws of the waves;
I mark'd the white combs where they career'd so high,
curling over;
I heard the wind piping, I saw the black clouds;
Saw from below what arose and mounted, (O superb! O
wild as my heart, and powerful!)
Heard the continuous thunder, as it bellow'd after the
lightning;
Noted the slender and jagged threads of lightning, as
sudden and fast amid the din they chased each
other across the sky;
— These, and such as these, I, elate, saw — saw with
wonder, yet pensive and masterful;
All the menacing might of the globe uprisen around me;
Yet there with my soul I fed — I fed content, super-
cilious.

2

'Twas well, O soul! 'twas a good preparation you gave
me!

Now we advance our latent and ampler hunger to fill;
Now we go forth to receive what the earth and the sea
never gave us;

Not through the mighty woods we go, but through the
mightier cities;

Something for us is pouring now, more than Niagara
pouring;

Torrents of men, (sources and rills of the Northwest, are
you indeed inexhaustible?)

What, to pavements and homesteads here — what were
those storms of the mountains and sea?

What, to passions I witness around me to-day? Was
the sea risen?

Was the wind piping the pipe of death under the black
clouds?

Lo! from deeps more unfathomable, something more
deadly and savage;

Manhattan, rising, advancing with menacing front —
Cincinnati, Chicago, unchain'd;

—What was that swell I saw on the ocean? behold
what comes here!

How it climbs with daring feet and hands! how it
dashes!

How the true thunder bellows after the lightning! how
bright the flashes of lightning!

How DEMOCRACY, with desperate vengeful port strides
on, shown through the dark by those flashes of
lightning!

(Yet a mournful wail and low sob I fancied I heard
through the dark,

In a lull of the deafening confusion.)

3

Thunder on! stride on Democracy! strike with vengeful
stroke!

And do you rise higher than ever yet, O days, O cities!

Crash heavier, heavier yet, O storms! you have done
 me good;
 My soul, prepared in the mountains, absorbs your im-
 mortal strong nutriment;
 Long had I walk'd my cities, my country roads, through
 farms, only half satisfied;
 One doubt, nauseous, undulating like a snake, crawl'd
 on the ground before me,
 Continually preceding my steps, turning upon me oft,
 ironically hissing low;
 — The cities I loved so well, I abandon'd and left — I
 sped to the certainties suitable to me;
 Hungering, hungering, hungering, for primal energies,
 and Nature's dauntlessness,
 I refresh'd myself with it only, I could relish it only;
 I waited the bursting forth of the pent fire — on the
 water and air I waited long;
 — But now I no longer wait — I am fully satisfied — I
 am glutted;
 I have witness'd the true lightning — I have witness'd
 my cities electric;
 I have lived to behold man burst forth, and warlike
 America rise;
 Hence I will seek no more the food of the northern soli-
 tary wilds,
 No more on the mountains roam, or sail the stormy sea.



A CHILD'S AMAZE.

SILENT and amazed, even when a little boy,
 I remember I heard the preacher every Sunday put God
 in his statements,
 As contending against some being or influence.

BEAT ! BEAT ! DRUMS !

1

BEAT ! beat ! drums ! — Blow ! bugles ! blow !
 Through the windows — through doors — burst like a
 force of ruthless men,
 Into the solemn church, and scatter the congregation ;
 Into the school where the scholar is studying ;
 Leave not the bridegroom quiet — no happiness must
 he have now with his bride ;
 Nor the peaceful farmer any peace, plowing his field or
 gathering his grain ;
 So fierce you whirr and pound, you drums — so shrill
 you bugles blow.

2

Beat ! beat ! drums ! — Blow ! bugles ! blow !
 Over the traffic of cities — over the rumble of wheels in
 the streets :
 Are beds prepared for sleepers at night in the houses ?
 No sleepers must sleep in those beds ;
 No bargainers' bargains by day — no brokers or specu-
 lators — Would they continue ?
 Would the talkers be talking ? would the singer attempt
 to sing ?
 Would the lawyer rise in the court to state his case
 before the judge ?
 Then rattle quicker, heavier drums — you bugles wilder
 blow.

3

Beat ! beat ! drums ! — Blow ! bugles ! blow !
 Make no parley — stop for no expostulation ;
 Mind not the timid — mind not the weeper or prayer ;
 Mind not the old man beseeching the young man ;
 Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's en-
 treaties ;
 Make even the trestles to shake the dead, where they lie
 awaiting the hearses,
 So strong you thump, O terrible drums — so loud
 you bugles blow.

COME UP FROM THE FIELDS FATHER.

1 Come up from the fields, father, here's a letter from
our Pete;
And come to the front door, mother — here's a letter
from thy dear son.

2 Lo, 'tis autumn;
Lo, where the trees, deeper green, yellower and redder,
Cool and sweeten Ohio's villages, with leaves fluttering
in the moderate wind;
Where apples ripe in the orchards hang, and grapes on
the trellis'd vines;
(Smell you the smell of the grapes on the vines?
Smell you the buckwheat, where the bees were lately
buzzing?)

3 Above all, lo, the sky, so calm, so transparent after
the rain, and with wondrous clouds;
Below, too, all calm, all vital and beautiful — and the
farm prospers well.

4 Down in the fields all prospers well;
But now from the fields come, father — come at the
daughter's call;
And come to the entry, mother — to the front door come,
right away.

5 Fast as she can she hurries — something ominous —
her steps trembling;
She does not tarry to smooth her white hair, nor adjust
her cap.

6 Open the envelope quickly ;
 O this is not our son's writing, yet his name is sign'd ;
 O a strange hand writes for our dear son — O stricken
 mother's soul !

All swims before her eyes — flashes with black — she
 catches the main words only ;

Sentences broken — *gun-shot wound in the breast, cavalry
 skirmish, taken to hospital,*

At present low, but will soon be better.

7 Ah, now the single figure to me,
 Amid all teeming and wealthy Ohio, with all its cities
 and farms,

Sickly white in the face and dull in the head, very faint,
 By the jamb of a door leans.

8 Grieve not so, dear mother, (the just-grown daughter
 speaks through her sobs ;

The little sisters huddle around, speechless and dis-
 may'd ;)

See, dearest mother, the letter says Pete will soon be better.

9 Alas, poor boy, he will never be better, (nor may-be
 needs to be better, that brave and simple soul ;)

While they stand at home at the door, he is dead already ;
 The only son is dead.

10 But the mother needs to be better ;

She, with thin form, presently drest in black ;

By day her meals untouch'd — then at night fitfully
 sleeping, often waking,

In the midnight waking, weeping, longing with one deep
 longing,

O that she might withdraw unnoticed — silent from life,
 escape and withdraw,

To follow, to seek, to be with her dear dead son.

CITY OF SHIPS.

—

CITY of ships!
 (O the black ships! O the fierce ships!
 O the beautiful, sharp bow'd steam-ships and sail-ships!)
 City of the world! (for all races are here;
 All the lands of the earth make contributions here;)
 City of the sea! city of hurried and glittering tides!
 City whose gleeful tides continually rush or recede,
 whirling in and out, with eddies and foam!
 City of wharves and stores! city of tall façades of mar-
 ble and iron!
 Proud and passionate city! mettlesome, mad, extrava-
 gant city!
 Spring up, O city! not for peace alone, but be indeed
 yourself, warlike!
 Fear not! submit to no models but your own, O city!
 Behold me! incarnate me, as I have incarnated you!
 I have rejected nothing you offer'd me — whom you
 adopted, I have adopted;
 Good or bad, I never question you — I love all — I do
 not condemn anything;
 I chant and celebrate all that is yours — yet peace no
 more;
 In peace I chanted peace, but now the drum of war is
 mine;
 War, red war, is my song through your streets, O city!

—•—

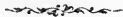
MOTHER AND BABE.

I SEE the sleeping babe, nestling the breast of its
 mother;
 The sleeping mother and babe — hush'd, I study them
 long and long.

VIGIL STRANGE I KEPT ON THE
FIELD ONE NIGHT.

VIGIL strange I kept on the field one night,
When you, my son and my comrade, dropt at my side
that day,
One look I but gave, which your dear eyes return'd,
with a look I shall never forget ;
One touch of your hand to mine, O boy, reach'd up as
you lay on the ground ;
Then onward I sped in the battle, the even-contested
battle ;
Till late in the night reliev'd, to the place at last again I
made my way ;
Found you in death so cold, dear comrade — found your
body, son of responding kisses, (never again on
earth responding ;)
Bared your face in the starlight — curious the scene —
cool blew the moderate night-wind ;
Long there and then in vigil I stood, dimly around me
the battle-field spreading ;
Vigil wondrous and vigil sweet, there in the fragrant
silent night ;
But not a tear fell, not even a long-drawn sigh — Long,
long I gazed ;
Then on the earth partially reclining, sat by your side,
leaning my chin in my hands ;
Passing sweet hours, immortal and mystic hours with
you, dearest comrade — Not a tear, not a word ;
Vigil of silence, love and death — vigil for you, my son
and my soldier,
As onward silently stars aloft, eastward new ones up-
ward stole ;
Vigil final for you, brave boy, (I could not save you,
swift was your death,

I faithfully loved you and cared for you living — I think
 we shall surely meet again ;)
 Till at latest lingering of the night, indeed just as the
 dawn appear'd,
 My comrade I wrapt in his blanket, envelop'd well his
 form,
 Folded the blanket well, tucking it carefully over head,
 and carefully under feet ;
 And there and then, and bathed by the rising sun, my
 son in his grave, in his rude-dug grave I de-
 posited ;
 Ending my vigil strange with that — vigil of night and
 battle-field dim ;
 Vigil for boy of responding kisses, (never again on earth
 responding ;)
 Vigil for comrade swiftly slain — vigil I never forget,
 how as day brighten'd,
 I rose from the chill ground, and folded my soldier well
 in his blanket,
 And buried him where he fell.



BATHED IN WAR'S PERFUME.

BATHED in war's perfume — delicate flag !
 O to hear you call the sailors and the soldiers ! flag like
 a beautiful woman !
 O to hear the tramp, tramp, of a million answering men !
 O the ships they arm with joy !
 O to see you leap and beckon from the tall masts of
 ships !
 O to see you peering down on the sailors on the decks !
 Flag like the eyes of women.

A MARCH IN THE RANKS HARD-PREST,
AND THE ROAD UNKNOWN.

A MARCH in the ranks hard-prest, and the road unknown ;
A route through a heavy wood, with muffled steps in the
darkness ;
Our army foil'd with loss severe, and the sullen remnant
retreating ;
Till after midnight glimmer upon us, the lights of a
dim-lighted building ;
We come to an open space in the woods, and halt by the
dim-lighted building ;
'Tis a large old church, at the crossing roads — 'tis now
an impromptu hospital ;
— Entering but for a minute, I see a sight beyond all
the pictures and poems ever made :
Shadows of deepest, deepest black, just lit by moving
candles and lamps,
And by one great pitchy torch, stationary, with wild red
flame, and clouds of smoke ;
By these, crowds, groups of forms, vaguely I see, on the
floor, some in the pews laid down ;
At my feet more distinctly, a soldier, a mere lad, in
danger of bleeding to death, (he is shot in the ab-
domen ;)
I staunch the blood temporarily, (the youngster's face is
white as a lily ;)
Then before I depart I sweep my eyes o'er the scene,
fain to absorb it all ;
Faces, varieties, postures beyond description, most in
obscurity, some of them dead ;
Surgeons operating, attendants holding lights, the smell
of ether, the odor of blood ;

The crowd, O the crowd of the bloody forms of soldiers
 — the yard outside also fill'd ;
 Some on the bare ground, some on planks or stretchers,
 some in the death-spasm sweating ;
 An occasional scream or cry, the doctor's shouted orders
 or calls ;
 The glisten of the little steel instruments catching the
 glint of the torches ;
 These I resume as I chant — I see again the forms, I
 smell the odor ;
 Then hear outside the orders given, *Fall in, my men,*
 Fall in ;
 But first I bend to the dying lad — his eyes open — a
 half-smile gives he me ;
 Then the eyes close, calmly close, and I speed forth to
 the darkness,
 Resuming, marching, as ever in darkness marching, on
 in the ranks,
 The unknown road still marching.



LONG, TOO LONG, O LAND.

LONG, too long, O land,
 Traveling roads all even and peaceful, you learn'd from
 joys and prosperity only ;
 But now, ah now, to learn from crises of anguish — ad-
 vancing, grappling with direst fate, and recoiling
 not ;
 And now to conceive, and show to the world, what your
 children en-masse really are ;
 (For who except myself has yet conceived what your
 children en-masse really are ?)

A SIGHT IN CAMP IN THE DAY-BREAK
GREY AND DIM.

1 A SIGHT in camp in the day-break grey and dim,
As from my tent I emerge so early, sleepless,
As slow I walk in the cool fresh air, the path near by
the hospital-tent,
Three forms I see on stretchers lying, brought out there,
untended lying,
Over each the blanket spread, ample brownish woolen
blanket,
Grey and heavy blanket, folding, covering all.

2 Curious, I halt, and silent stand ;
Then with light fingers I from the face of the nearest,
the first, just lift the blanket :
Who are you, elderly man so gaunt and grim, with
well-grey'd hair, and flesh all sunken about the
eyes ?
Who are you, my dear comrade ?

3 Then to the second I step — And who are you, my
child and darling ?
Who are you, sweet boy, with cheeks yet blooming ?

4 Then to the third — a face nor child, nor old, very
calm, as of beautiful yellow-white ivory :
Young man, I think I know you — I think this face of
yours is the face of the Christ himself ;
Dead and divine, and brother of all, and here again he
lies.

A FARM PICTURE.

THROUGH the ample open door of the peaceful country
barn,
A sun-lit pasture field, with cattle and horses feeding.

GIVE ME THE SPLENDID SILENT SUN.



1

GIVE me the splendid silent sun, with all his beams full-
 dazzling ;
 Give me juicy autumnal fruit, ripe and red from the
 orchard ;
 Give me a field where the unmow'd grass grows ;
 Give me an arbor, give me the trellis'd grape ;
 Give me fresh corn and wheat — give me serene-moving
 animals, teaching content ;
 Give me nights perfectly quiet, as on high plateaus west
 of the Mississippi, and I looking up at the stars ;
 Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful flowers,
 where I can walk undisturb'd ;
 Give me for marriage a sweet-breath'd woman, of whom
 I should never tire ;
 Give me a perfect child — give me, away, aside from the
 noise of the world, a rural domestic life ;
 Give me to warble spontaneous songs, reliev'd, recluse
 by myself, for my own ears only ;
 Give me solitude — give me Nature — give me again,
 O Nature, your primal sanities !
 — These, demanding to have them, (tired with ceaseless
 excitement, and rack'd by the war-strife ;)
 These to procure, incessantly asking, rising in cries from
 my heart,
 While yet incessantly asking, still I adhere to my city ;
 Day upon day, and year upon year, O city, walking
 your streets,
 Where you hold me chain'd a certain time, refusing
 to give me up ;
 Yet giving to make me glutt'd, enrich'd of soul — you
 give me forever faces ;

(O I see what I sought to escape, confronting, reversing
 my cries;
 I see my own soul trampling down what it ask'd for.)

2

Keep your splendid silent sun;
 Keep your woods, O Nature, and the quiet places by
 the woods;
 Keep your fields of clover and timothy, and your corn-
 fields and orchards;
 Keep the blossoming buckwheat fields, where the Ninth-
 month bees hum;
 Give me faces and streets! give me these phantoms in-
 cessant and endless along the trottoirs!
 Give me interminable eyes! give me women! give me
 comrades and lovers by the thousand!
 Let me see new ones every day! let me hold new ones
 by the hand every day!
 Give me such shows! give me the streets of Manhattan!
 Give me Broadway, with the soldiers marching — give
 me the sound of the trumpets and drums!
 (The soldiers in companies or regiments — some, starting
 away, flush'd and reckless;
 Some, their time up, returning, with thinn'd ranks —
 young, yet very old, worn, marching, noticing
 nothing;)
 — Give me the shores and the wharves heavy-fringed
 with the black ships!
 O such for me! O an intense life! O full to repletion,
 and varied!
 The life of the theatre, bar-room, huge hotel, for me!
 The saloon of the steamer! the crowded excursion for
 me! the torch-light procession!
 The dense brigade, bound for the war, with high piled
 military wagons following;
 People, endless, streaming, with strong voices, passions,
 pageants;
 Manhattan streets, with their powerful throbs, with the
 beating drums, as now;

The endless and noisy chorus, the rustle and clank of
 muskets, (even the sight of the wounded;)
 Manhattan crowds with their turbulent musical chorus
 — with varied chorus and light of the sparkling
 eyes;
 Manhattan faces and eyes forever for me.



OVER THE CARNAGE ROSE PROPHEPIC A VOICE.



- 1 OVER the carnage rose prophetic a voice,
 Be not dishearten'd — Affection shall solve the problems
 of Freedom yet;
 Those who love each other shall become invincible —
 they shall yet make Columbia victorious.
- 2 Sons of the Mother of All! you shall yet be victo-
 rious!
 You shall yet laugh to scorn the attacks of all the re-
 mainder of the earth.
- 3 No danger shall balk Columbia's lovers;
 If need be, a thousand shall sternly immolate themselves
 for one.
- 4 One from Massachusetts shall be a Missourian's com-
 rade;
 From Maine and from hot Carolina, and another an Ore-
 gonese, shall be friends triune,
 More precious to each other than all the riches of the
 earth.

5 To Michigan, Florida perfumes shall tenderly come ;
Not the perfumes of flowers, but sweeter, and wafted
beyond death.

6 It shall be customary in the houses and streets to see
manly affection ;
The most dauntless and rude shall touch face to face
lightly ;
The dependence of Liberty shall be lovers,
The continuance of Equality shall be comrades.

7 These shall tie you and band you stronger than hoops
of iron ;
I, extatic, O partners! O lands! with the love of lovers
tie you.

8 Were you looking to be held together by the lawyers?
Or by an agreement on a paper? or by arms?
—Nay—nor the world, nor any living thing, will so
cohere.



DID YOU ASK DULCET RHYMES FROM ME?



DID YOU ask dulcet rhymes from me?
Did you find what I sang erewhile so hard to follow,
to understand?
Why I was not singing erewhile for you to follow, to
understand—nor am I now ;
—What to such as you, anyhow, such a poet as I?
—therefore leave my works,
And go lull yourself with what you can understand ;
For I lull nobody—and you will never understand me.

YEAR OF METEORS.

(1859-60.)



YEAR of meteors ! brooding year !
 I would bind in words retrospective, some of your deeds
 and signs ;
 I would sing your contest for the 19th Presidentiad ;
 I would sing how an old man, tall, with white hair,
 mounted the scaffold in Virginia ;
 (I was at hand — silent I stood, with teeth shut close — I
 watch'd ;
 I stood very near you, old man, when cool and indiffer-
 ent, but trembling with age and your unheal'd
 wounds, you mounted the scaffold ;)
 I would sing in my copious song your census returns of
 The States,
 The tables of population and products — I would sing of
 your ships and their cargoes,
 The proud black ships of Manhattan, arriving, some
 fill'd with immigrants, some from the isthmus
 with cargoes of gold ;
 Songs thereof would I sing — to all that hitherward
 comes would I welcome give ;
 And you would I sing, fair stripling ! welcome to you
 from me, sweet boy of England !
 Remember you surging Manhattan's crowds, as you
 passed with your cortege of nobles ?
 There in the crowds stood I, and singled you out with
 attachment ;
 I know not why, but I loved you . . . (and so go forth
 little song,
 Far over sea speed like an arrow, carrying my love all
 folded,

And find in his palace the youth I love, and drop these
 lines at his feet ;)
 — Nor forget I to sing of the wonder, the ship as she
 swam up my bay,
 Well-shaped and stately the Great Eastern swam up my
 bay, she was 600 feet long,
 Her moving swiftly, surrounded by myriads of small
 craft, I forget not to sing ;
 Nor the comet that came unannounced, out of the north,
 flaring in heaven,
 Nor the strange huge meteor procession, dazzling and
 clear, shooting over our heads,
 (A moment, a moment long, it sail'd its balls of unearth-
 ly light over our heads,
 Then departed, dropt in the night, and was gone ;)
 — Of such, and fitful as they, I sing — with gleams from
 them would I gleam and patch these chants ;
 Your chants, O year all mottled with evil and good !
 year of forebodings ! year of the youth I love !
 Year of comets and meteors transient and strange ! — lo !
 even here, one equally transient and strange !
 As I flit through you hastily, soon to fall and be gone,
 what is this book,
 What am I myself but one of your meteors ?



THE TORCH.

ON my northwest coast in the midst of the night, a
 fishermen's group stands watching ;
 Out on the lake, expanding before them, others are
 spearing salmon ;
 The canoe, a dim and shadowy thing, moves across the
 black water,
 Bearing a Torch a-blaze at the prow.

YEARS OF THE UNPERFORM'D.



YEARS of the unperform'd ! your horizon rises — I see it
 parting away for more august dramas ;
 I see not America only — I see not only Liberty's nation,
 but other nations preparing ;
 I see tremendous entrances and exits — I see new com-
 binations — I see the solidarity of races ;
 I see that force advancing with irresistible power on the
 world's stage ;
 (Have the old forces played their parts ? are the acts
 suitable to them closed ?)
 I see Freedom, completely arm'd, and victorious, and
 very haughty, with Law by her side, both issuing
 forth against the idea of caste ;
 — What historic denouements are these we so rapidly
 approach ?
 I see men marching and countermarching by swift mil-
 lions ;
 I see the frontiers and boundaries of the old aristocracies
 broken ;
 I see the landmarks of European kings removed ;
 I see this day the People beginning their landmarks, (all
 others give way ;)
 Never were such sharp questions ask'd as this day ;
 Never was average man, his soul, more energetic, more
 like a God ;
 Lo, how he urges and urges, leaving the masses no
 rest ;
 His daring foot is on land and sea everywhere — he col-
 onizes the Pacific, the archipelagoes ;
 With the steam-ship, the electric telegraph, the news-
 paper, the wholesale engines of war,
 With these, and the world-spreading factories, he inter-
 links all geography, all lands ;

— What whispers are these, O lands, running ahead of
 you, passing under the seas?
 Are all nations communing? is there going to be but
 one heart to the globe?
 Is humanity forming, en-masse? — for lo! tyrants trem-
 ble, crowns grow dim;
 The earth, restive, confronts a new era, perhaps a gen-
 eral divine war;
 No one knows what will happen next — such portents
 fill the days and nights;
 Years prophetic! the space ahead as I walk, as I vain-
 ly try to pierce it, is full of phantoms;
 Unborn deeds, things soon to be, project their shapes
 around me;
 This incredible rush and heat — this strange extactic
 fever of dreams, O years!
 Your dreams, O years, how they penetrate through me!
 (I know not whether I sleep or wake!)
 The perform'd America and Europe grow dim, retiring
 in shadow behind me,
 The unperform'd, more gigantic than ever, advance, ad-
 vance upon me.



YEAR THAT TREMBLED AND REEL'D
 BENEATH ME.

YEAR that trembled and reel'd beneath me!
 Your summer wind was warm enough — yet the air I
 breathed froze me;
 A thick gloom fell through the sunshine and darken'd
 me;
 Must I change my triumphant songs? said I to myself;
 Must I indeed learn to chant the cold dirges of the baf-
 fled?
 And sullen hymns of defeat?

THE VETERAN'S VISION.

WHILE my wife at my side lies slumbering, and the wars
are over long,
And my head on the pillow rests at home, and the mystic
midnight passes,
And through the stillness, through the dark, I hear, just
hear, the breath of my infant,
There in the room, as I wake from sleep, this vision
presses upon me:
The engagement opens there and then, in my busy brain
unreal ;
The skirmishers begin — they crawl cautiously ahead —
I hear the irregular snap! snap!
I hear the sounds of the different missiles — the short
t-h-t! t-h-t! of the rifle balls ;
I see the shells exploding, leaving small white clouds —
I hear the great shells shrieking as they pass ;
The grape, like the hum and whirr of wind through the
trees, (quick, tumultuous, now the contest rages!)
All the scenes at the batteries themselves rise in detail
before me again ;
The crashing and smoking — the pride of the men in
their pieces ;
The chief gunner ranges and sights his piece, and selects
a fuse of the right time ;
After firing, I see him lean aside, and look eagerly off
to note the effect ;
— Elsewhere I hear the cry of a regiment charging —
(the young colonel leads himself this time, with
brandish'd sword ;)
I see the gaps cut by the enemy's volleys, (quickly
fill'd up — no delay ;)
I breathe the suffocating smoke — then the flat clouds
hover low, concealing all ;

Now a strange lull comes for a few seconds, not a shot
 fired on either side ;
 Then resumed, the chaos louder than ever, with eager
 calls, and orders of officers ;
 While from some distant part of the field the wind wafts
 to my ears a shout of applause, (some special
 success ;)
 And ever the sound of the cannon, far or near, (rousing,
 even in dreams, a devilish exultation, and all the
 old mad joy, in the depths of my soul ;)
 And ever the hastening of infantry shifting positions —
 batteries, cavalry, moving hither and thither ;
 (The falling, dying, I heed not — the wounded, dripping
 and red, I heed not — some to the rear are hob-
 bling ;)
 Grime, heat, rush — aid-de-camps galloping by, or on a
 full run ;
 With the patter of small arms, the warning *s-s-t* of the
 rifles, (these in my vision I hear or see,)
 And bombs bursting in air, and at night the vari-color'd
 rockets.



O TAN-FACED PRAIRIE-BOY.

O TAN-FACED prairie-boy !
 Before you came to camp, came many a welcome gift ;
 Praises and presents came, and nourishing food — till at
 last among the recruits,
 You came, taciturn, with nothing to give — we but
 look'd on each other,
 When lo ! more than all the gifts of the world, you
 gave me.

CAMPS OF GREEN.



1 Not alone our camps of white, O soldiers,
 When, as order'd forward, after a long march,
 Footsore and weary, soon as the light lessens, we halt
 for the night;
 Some of us so fatigued, carrying the gun and knapsack,
 dropping asleep in our tracks;
 Others pitching the little tents, and the fires lit up begin
 to sparkle;
 Outposts of pickets posted, surrounding, alert through
 the dark,
 And a word provided for countersign, careful for safety;
 Till to the call of the drummers at daybreak loudly
 beating the drums,
 We rise up refresh'd, the night and sleep pass'd over,
 and resume our journey,
 Or proceed to battle.

2 Lo! the camps of the tents of green,
 Which the days of peace keep filling, and the days of
 war keep filling,
 With a mystic army, (is it too order'd forward? is it too
 only halting awhile,
 Till night and sleep pass over?)

3 Now in those camps of green — in their tents dotting
 the world;
 In the parents, children, husbands, wives, in them —
 in the old and young,
 Sleeping under the sunlight, sleeping under the moon-
 light, content and silent there at last,
 Behold the mighty bivouac-field, and waiting-camp of
 us and ours and all,

Of our corps and generals all, and the President over the
 corps and generals all,
 And of each of us, O soldiers, and of each and all in the
 ranks we fight,
 (There without hatred we shall all meet.)

4 For presently, O soldiers, we too camp in our place
 in the bivouac-camps of green ;
 But we need not provide for outposts, nor word for
 the countersign,
 Nor drummer to beat the morning drum.



AS TOILSOME I WANDER'D VIRGINIA'S WOODS.



1 As TOILSOME I wander'd Virginia's woods,
 To the music of rustling leaves, kick'd by my feet, (for
 'twas autumn,)

I mark'd at the foot of a tree the grave of a soldier ;
 Mortally wounded he, and buried on the retreat, (easily
 all could I understand ;)

The halt of a mid-day hour, when up ! no time to lose
 — yet this sign left,

On a tablet scrawl'd and nail'd on the tree by the grave,
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

2 Long, long I muse, then on my way go wandering ;
 Many a changeful season to follow, and many a scene of
 life ;

Yet at times through changeful season and scene, abrupt,
 alone, or in the crowded street,

Comes before me the unknown soldier's grave — comes
 the inscription rude in Virginia's woods,

Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

HYMN OF DEAD SOLDIERS.

- 1 ONE breath, O my silent soul,
A perfum'd thought — no more I ask, for the sake of all
dead soldiers.
- 2 Buglers off in my armies!
At present I ask not you to sound;
Not at the head of my cavalry, all on their spirited
horses,
With their sabres drawn and glist'ning, and carbines
clanking by their thighs — (ah, my brave horse-
men!
My handsome, tan-faced horsemen! what life, what joy
and pride,
With all the perils, were yours!)
- 3 Nor you drummers — neither at reveille, at dawn,
Nor the long roll alarming the camp — nor even the
muffled beat for a burial;
Nothing from you, this time, O drummers, bearing my
warlike drums.
- 4 But aside from these, and the crowd's hurrahs, and
the land's congratulations,
Admitting around me comrades close, unseen by the
the rest, and voiceless,
I chant this chant of my silent soul, in the name of all
dead soldiers.
- 5 Faces so pale, with wondrous eyes, very dear, gather
closer yet;
Draw close, but speak not.

- 6 Phantoms, welcome, divine and tender!
Invisible to the rest, henceforth become my companions;
Follow me ever! desert me not, while I live.
- 7 Sweet are the blooming cheeks of the living! sweet
are the musical voices sounding!
But sweet, ah sweet, are the dead, with their silent eyes.
- 8 Dearest comrades! all now is over;
But love is not over — and what love, O comrades!
Perfume from battle-fields rising — up from fœtor
arising.
- 9 Perfume therefore my chant, O love! immortal Love!
Give me to bathe the memories of all dead soldiers.
- 10 Perfume all! make all wholesome!
O love! O chant! solve all with the last chemistry.
- 11 Give me exhaustless — make me a fountain,
That I exhale love from me wherever I go,
For the sake of all dead soldiers.



THE SHIP.

Lo! THE unbounded sea!
On its breast a Ship, spreading all her sails — an ample
Ship, carrying even her moonsails;
The pennant is flying aloft, as she speeds, she
speeds so stately — below, emulous waves press
forward,
They surround the Ship, with shining curving motions,
and foam.

A BROADWAY PAGEANT.

(RECEPTION JAPANESE EMBASSY, JUNE 16, 1860.)



1 OVER sea, hither from Nippon,
Courteous, the Princes of Asia, swart-cheek'd princes,
First-comers, guests, two-sworded princes,
Lesson-giving princes, leaning back in their open ba-
rrouches, bare-headed, impassive,
This day they ride through Manhattan.

2 Libertad !
I do not know whether others behold what I behold,
In the procession, along with the Princes of Asia, the
errand-bearers,
Bringing up the rear, hovering above, around, or in the
ranks marching ;
But I will sing you a song of what I behold, Libertad.

3 When million-footed Manhattan, unpent, descends to
its pavements ;
When the thunder-cracking guns arouse me with the
proud roar I love ;
When the round-mouth'd guns, out of the smoke and
smell I love, spit their salutes ;
When the fire-flashing guns have fully alerted me —
when heaven-clouds canopy my city with a
delicate thin haze ;
When, gorgeous, the countless straight stems, the for-
ests at the wharves, thicken with colors ;
When every ship, richly drest, carries her flag at the
peak ;
When pennants trail, and street-festoons hang from the
windows ;

When Broadway is entirely given up to foot-passengers
and foot-standers — when the mass is densest ;

When the façades of the houses are alive with people —
when eyes gaze, riveted, tens of thousands at a
time ;

When the guests from the islands advance — when the
pageant moves forward, visible ;

When the summons is made — when the answer that
waited thousands of years, answers ;

I too, arising, answering, descend to the pavements,
merge with the crowd, and gaze with them.

4 Superb-faced Manhattan !

Comrade Americanos ! — to us, then, at last, the Orient
comes.

5 To us, my city,

Where our tall-topt marble and iron beauties range on
opposite sides — to walk in the space between,

To-day our Antipodes comes.

6 The Originatress comes,

The land of Paradise — land of the Caucasus — the nest
of birth,

The nest of languages, the bequeather of poems, the
race of eld,

Florid with blood, pensive, rapt with musings, hot with
passion,

Sultry with perfume, with ample and flowing garments,
With sunburnt visage, with intense soul and glittering
eyes.

The race of Brahma comes !

7 See, my cantabile ! these, and more, are flashing to us
from the procession ;

As it moves, changing, a kaleidoscope divine it moves,
changing, before us.

8 Not the errand-bearing princes, nor the tann'd Japane
nee only ;

Lithe and silent, the Hindoo appears — the whole Asiatic
 continent itself appears — the Past, the dead,
 The murky night-morning of wonder and fable, inscruta-
 ble,
 The envelop'd mysteries, the old and unknown hive-
 bees,
 The North — the sweltering South — Assyria — the
 Hebrews — the Ancient of ancients,
 Vast desolated cities — the gliding Present — all of
 these, and more, are in the pageant-procession.

° Geography, the world, is in it;
 The Great Sea, the brood of islands, Polynesia, the coast
 beyond ;
 The coast you, henceforth, are facing — you Libertad!
 from your Western golden shores ;
 The countries there, with their populations — the mil-
 lions en-masse, are curiously here ;
 The swarming market places — the temples, with idols
 ranged along the sides, or at the end — bonze,
 brahmin, and lama ;
 The mandarin, farmer, merchant, mechanic, and fisher-
 man ;
 The singing-girl and the dancing-girl — the ecstatic
 person — the divine Buddha ;
 The secluded Emperors — Confucius himself — the
 great poets and heroes — the warriors, the castes,
 all,
 Trooping up, crowding from all directions — from the
 Altay mountains,
 From Thibet — from the four winding and far-flowing
 rivers of China,
 From the Southern peninsulas, and the demi-continental
 islands — from Malaysia ;
 These, and whatever belongs to them, palpable, show
 forth to me, and are seiz'd by me,
 And I am seiz'd by them, and friendly held by them,
 Till, as here, them all I chant, Libertad! for themselves
 and for you.

10 For I too, raising my voice, join the ranks of this
 pageant ;
 I am the chanter — I chant aloud over the pageant ;
 I chant the world on my Western Sea ;
 I chant, copious, the islands beyond, thick as stars in
 the sky ;
 I chant the new empire, grander than any before — As
 in a vision it comes to me ;
 I chant America, the Mistress — I chant a greater su-
 premacy ;
 I chant, projected, a thousand blooming cities yet, in
 time, on those groups of sea-islands ;
 I chant my sail-ships and steam-ships threading the ar-
 chipelagoes ;
 I chant my stars and stripes fluttering in the wind ;
 I chant commerce opening, the sleep of ages having
 done its work — races, reborn, refresh'd ;
 Lives, works, resumed — The object I know not — but
 the old, the Asiatic, resumed, as it must be,
 Commencing from this day, surrounded by the world.

11 And you, Libertad of the world !
 You shall sit in the middle, well-pois'd, thousands of
 years ;
 As to-day, from one side, the Princes of Asia come to
 you ;
 As to-morrow, from the other side, the Queen of Eng-
 land sends her eldest son to you.

12 The sign is reversing, the orb is enclosed,
 The ring is circled, the journey is done ;
 The box-lid is but perceptibly open'd — nevertheless the
 perfume pours copiously out of the whole box.

13 Young Libertad !
 With the venerable Asia, the all-mother,
 Be considerate with her, now and ever, hot Libertad —
 for you are all ;

Bend your proud neck to the long-off mother, now
 sending messages over the archipelagoes to you ;
 Bend your proud neck low for once, young Libertad.

14 Were the children straying westward so long ? so
 wide the tramping ?

Were the precedent dim ages debouching westward
 from Paradise so long ?

Were the centuries steadily footing it that way, all the
 while unknown, for you, for reasons ?

They are justified — they are accomplish'd — they shall
 now be turn'd the other way also, to travel to-
 ward you thence ;

They shall now also march obediently eastward, for
 your sake, Libertad.



FLAG OF STARS, THICK-SPRINKLED BUNTING.

FLAG of stars ! thick-sprinkled bunting !

Long yet your road, fateful flag ! — long yet your road,
 and lined with bloody death !

For the prize I see at issue, at last is the world !

All its ships and shores I see, interwoven with your
 threads, greedy banner !

— Dream'd again the flags of kings, highest borne, to
 flaunt unrivall'd ?

O hasten, flag of man ! O with sure and steady step,
 passing highest flags of kings,

Walk supreme to the heavens, mighty symbol — run up
 above them all,

Flag of stars ! thick sprinkled bunting !

OLD IRELAND.

1 FAR hence, amid an isle of wondrous beauty,
 Crouching over a grave, an ancient sorrowful mother,
 Once a queen — now lean and tatter'd, seated on the
 ground,
 Her old white hair drooping dishevel'd round her shoulders;
 At her feet fallen an unused royal harp,
 Long silent — she too long silent — mourning her shrouded
 hope and heir;
 Of all the earth her heart most full of sorrow, because
 most full of love.

2 Yet a word, ancient mother;
 You need crouch there no longer on the cold ground,
 with forehead between your knees;
 O you need not sit there, veil'd in your old white
 hair, so dishevel'd;
 For know you, the one you mourn is not in that grave;
 It was an illusion — the heir, the son you love, was not
 really dead;
 The Lord is not dead — he is risen again, young and
 strong, in another country;
 Even while you wept there by your fallen harp, by the
 grave,
 What you wept for, was translated, pass'd from the
 grave,
 The winds favor'd, and the sea sail'd it,
 And now with rosy and new blood,
 Moves to-day in a new country.



LOOK DOWN FAIR MOON.

Look down, fair moon, and bathe this scene;
 Pour softly down night's nimbus floods, on faces ghastly,
 swollen, purple;
 On the dead, on their backs, with their arms toss'd wide,
 Pour down your unstinted nimbus, sacred moon.

OUT OF THE ROLLING OCEAN, THE CROWD.

—
1

Out of the rolling ocean, the crowd, came a drop gently
to me,
Whispering, *I love you, before long I die,*
I have travel'd a long way, merely to look on you, to touch you,
For I could not die till I once look'd on you,
For I fear'd I might afterward lose you.

2

(Now we have met, we have look'd, we are safe;
Return in peace to the ocean my love;
I too am part of that ocean, my love — we are not so
much separated;
Behold the great rondure — the cohesion of all, how perfect!
But as for me, for you, the irresistible sea is to separate us,
As for an hour carrying us diverse — yet cannot carry us diverse for ever;
Be not impatient — a little space — know you, I salute
the air, the ocean and the land,
Every day, at sundown, for your dear sake, my love.)

—
WORLD, TAKE GOOD NOTICE.

WORLD, take good notice, silver stars fading,
Milky hue ript, west of white detaching,
Coals thirty-six, baleful and burning,
Scarlet, significant, hands off warning,
Now and henceforth flaunt from these shores.

I SAW OLD GENERAL AT BAY.

I SAW old General at bay ;
 (Old as he was, his grey eyes yet shone out in battle
 like stars ;)
 His small force was now completely hemmed in, in his
 works ;
 He call'd for volunteers to run the enemy's lines — a
 desperate emergency ;
 I saw a hundred and more step forth from the ranks —
 but two or three were selected ;
 I saw them receive their orders aside — they listen'd
 with care — the adjutant was very grave ;
 I saw them depart with cheerfulness, freely risking their
 lives.



OTHERS MAY PRAISE WHAT THEY LIKE.

OTHERS may praise what they like ;
 But I, from the banks of the running Missouri, praise
 nothing, in art, or aught else,
 Till it has breathed well the atmosphere of this river —
 also the western prairie-scent,
 And fully exudes it again.



SOLID, IRONICAL, ROLLING ORB.

SOLID, ironical, rolling orb !
 Master of all, and matter of fact ! — at last I accept your
 terms ;
 Bringing to practical, vulgar tests, of all my ideal
 dreams,
 And of me, as lover and hero.

HUSH'D BE THE CAMPS TO-DAY.

A. L. BURIED APRIL 19, 1865.

- 1 HUSH'D be the camps to-day ;
 And, soldiers, let us drape our war-worn weapons ;
 And each, with musing soul retire, to celebrate,
 Our dear commander's death.
- 2 No more for him life's stormy conflicts ;
 Nor victory, nor defeat — No more time's dark events,
 Charging like ceaseless clouds across the sky.
- 3 But sing, poet, in our name ;
 Sing of the love we bore him — because you, dweller in
 camps, know it truly.
- 4 Sing, to the lower'd coffin there ;
 Sing, with the shovel'd clods that fill the grave — a
 verse,
 For the heavy hearts of soldiers.



WEAVE IN, WEAVE IN, MY HARDY LIFE.

WEAVE in ! weave in, my hardy life !
 Weave, weave a soldier strong and full, for great cam-
 paigns to come ;
 Weave in red blood ! weave sinews in, like ropes ! the
 senses, sight weave in !
 Weave lasting sure ! weave day and night the weft, the
 warp ! incessant weave ! tire not !
 (We know not what the use, O life ! nor know the aim,
 the end — nor really aught we know ;
 But know the work, the need goes on, and shall go
 on — the death-envelop'd march of peace as well
 as war, goes on ;)
 For great campaigns of peace the same, the wiry
 threads to weave ;
 We know not why or what, yet weave, forever weave.

TURN O LIBERTAD.

TURN, O Libertad, no more doubting ;
 Turn from lands retrospective, recording proofs of the
 past ;
 From the singers that sing the trailing glories of the
 past ;
 From the chants of the feudal world — the triumphs of
 kings, slavery, caste ;
 Turn to the world, the triumphs reserv'd and to come —
 give up that backward world ;
 Leave to the singers of hitherto — give them the trailing
 past :
 But what remains, remains for singers for you — wars
 to come are for you ;
 (Lo! how the wars of the past have duly inured to you
 — and the wars of the present shall also inure :)
 — Then turn, and be not alarm'd, O Libertad — turn
 your undying face,
 To where the future, greater than all the past,
 Is swiftly, surely preparing for you.



BIVOUAC ON A MOUNTAIN SIDE.

I SEE before me now, a traveling army halting ;
 Below, a fertile valley spread, with barns, and the orch-
 ards of summer ;
 Behind, the terraced sides of a mountain, abrupt in
 places, rising high ;
 Broken, with rocks, with clinging cedars, with tall
 shapes, dingily seen ;
 The numerous camp-fires scatter'd near and far, some
 away up on the mountain ;
 The shadowy forms of men and horses, looming, large-
 sized, flickering ;
 And over all, the sky — the sky! far, far out of reach,
 studded with the eternal stars.

PENSIVE ON HER DEAD GAZING, I HEARD
THE MOTHER OF ALL.



PENSIVE, on her dead gazing, I heard the Mother of All,
Desperate, on the torn bodies, on the forms covering the
battle-fields gazing ;
As she call'd to her earth with mournful voice while she
stalk'd :
Absorb them well, O my earth, she cried — I charge you,
lose not my sons ! lose not an atom ;
And you streams, absorb them well, taking their dear
blood ;
And you local spots, and you airs that swim above
lightly,
And all you essences of soil and growth — and you, O
my rivers' depths ;
And you mountain sides — and the woods where my
dear children's blood, trickling, redden'd ;
And you trees, down in your roots, to bequeath to all
future trees,
My dead absorb — my young men's beautiful bodies ab-
sorb — and their precious, precious, precious
blood ;
Which holding in trust for me, faithfully back again give
me, many a year hence,
In unseen essence and odor of surface and grass, centu-
ries hence ;
In blowing airs from the fields, back again give me my
darlings — give my immortal heroes ;
Exhale me them centuries hence — breathe me their
breath — let not an atom be lost ;
O years and graves ! O air and soil ! O my dead, an
aroma sweet !
Exhale them perennial, sweet death, years, centuries
hence.

NOT YOUTH PERTAINS TO ME.

Not youth pertains to me,
Nor delicatessen — I cannot beguile the time with talk ;
Awkward in the parlor, neither a dancer nor elegant ;
In the learn'd coterie sitting constrain'd and still — for
learning inures not to me ;
Beauty, knowledge, fortune, inure not to me — yet
there are two things inure to me ;
I have nourish'd the wounded, and sooth'd many a
dying soldier ;
And at intervals I have strung together a few songs,
Fit for war, and the life of the camp.



FINIS.





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SEQUEL TO DRUM-TAPS.

(SINCE THE PRECEDING CAME FROM THE PRESS.)



**WHEN LILACS LAST IN THE
DOOR-YARD BLOOM'D.**

AND OTHER PIECES.



WASHINGTON.

1865-6.

C O N T E N T S .

	PAGE.
When Lilacs last in the door-yard bloom'd.....	3
Race of Veterans.....	12
O Captain! my Captain!.....	13
Spirit whose work is done.....	14
Chanting the Square Deific.....	15
I heard you, solemn sweet pipes of the Organ.....	17
Not my Enemies ever invade me	17
O me! O life!.....	18
Ah poverties, wincings, and sulky retreats.....	18
As I lay with my head in your lap, Camerado.....	19
This day, O Soul.....	19
In clouds descending, in midnight sleep.....	20
An Army on the march.....	20
Dirge for Two Veterans.....	21
How solemn, as one by one.....	22
Lo! Victress on the Peaks!.....	23
Reconciliation.....	23
To the leaven'd Soil they trod.....	24

WHEN LILACS LAST IN THE DOOR-YARD BLOOM'D.



1

1 WHEN lilacs last in the door-yard bloom'd,
And the great star early droop'd in the western sky in the
night,
I mourn'd ... and yet shall mourn with ever-returning
spring.

2 O ever-returning spring! trinity sure to me you bring;
Lilac blooming perennial, and drooping star in the west,
And thought of him I love.

2

3 O powerful, western, fallen star!
O shades of night! O moody, tearful night!
O great star disappear'd! O the black murk that hides the
star!
O cruel hands that hold me powerless! O helpless soul of
me!
O harsh surrounding cloud that will not free my soul!

3

4 In the door-yard fronting an old farm-house, near the
white-wash'd palings,
Stands the lilac bush, tall-growing, with heart-shaped leaves
of rich green,
With many a pointed blossom, rising, delicate, with the
perfume strong I love,

With every leaf a miracle and from this bush in the
 door-yard,
 With its delicate-color'd blossoms, and heart-shaped leaves
 of rich green,
 A sprig, with its flower, I break.

4

5 In the swamp, in secluded recesses,
 A shy and hidden bird is warbling a song.

6 Solitary, the thrush,
 The hermit, withdrawn to himself, avoiding the settlements,
 Sings by himself a song.

7 Song of the bleeding throat!
 Death's outlet song of life—(for well, dear brother, I know,
 If thou wast not gifted to sing, thou would'st surely die.)

5

8 Over the breast of the spring, the land, amid cities,
 Amid lanes, and through old woods, (where lately the
 violets peep'd from the ground, spotting the gray
 debris;)
 Amid the grass in the fields each side of the lanes — passing
 the endless grass;
 Passing the yellow-spear'd wheat, every grain from its
 shroud in the dark-brown fields uprising;
 Passing the apple-tree blows of white and pink in the
 orchards;
 Carrying a corpse to where it shall rest in the grave,
 Night and day journeys a coffin.

6

9 Coffin that passes through lanes and streets,
 Through day and night, with the great cloud darkening the
 land,
 With the pomp of the inloop'd flags, with the cities draped
 in black,

With the show of the States themselves, as of crape-veil'd
 women, standing,
 With processions long and winding, and the flambeaus of
 the night,
 With the countless torches lit—with the silent sea of faces,
 and the unbarred heads,
 With the waiting depot, the arriving coffin, and the sombre
 faces,
 With dirges through the night, with the thousand voices
 rising strong and solemn;
 With all the mournful voices of the dirges, pour'd around
 the coffin,
 The dim-lit churches and the shuddering organs—Where
 amid these you journey,
 With the tolling, tolling bells' perpetual clang;
 Here! coffin that slowly passes,
 I give you my sprig of lilac.

7

¹⁰ (Nor for you, for one, alone;
 Blossoms and branches green to coffins all I bring:
 For fresh as the morning—thus would I chant a song for
 you, O sane and sacred death.

¹¹ All over bouquets of roses,
 O death! I cover you over with roses and early lilies;
 But mostly and now the lilac that blooms the first,
 Copious, I break, I break the sprigs from the bushes:
 With loaded arms I come, pouring for you,
 For you and the coffins all of you, O death.)

8

¹² O western orb, sailing the heaven!
 Now I know what you must have meant, as a month since
 we walk'd,
 As we walk'd up and down in the dark blue so mystic,
 As we walk'd in silence the transparent shadowy night,

As I saw you had something to tell, as you bent to me night
 after night,
 As you droop'd from the sky low down, as if to my side,
 (while the other stars all look'd on ;)
 As we wander'd together the solemn night, (for something
 I know not what, kept me from sleep ;)
 As the night advanced, and I saw on the rim of the west,
 ere you went, how full you were of woe ;
 As I stood on the rising ground in the breeze, in the cool
 transparent night,
 As I watch'd where you pass'd and was lost in the nether-
 ward black of the night,
 As my soul, in its trouble, dissatisfied, sank, as where you,
 sad orb,
 Concluded, dropt in the night, and was gone.

9

¹³ Sing on, there in the swamp !
 O singer bashful and tender ! I hear your notes—I hear
 your call ;
 I hear—I come presently—I understand you ;
 But a moment I linger—for the lustrous star has detain'd
 me ;
 The star, my comrade, departing, holds and detains me.

10

¹⁴ O how shall I warble myself for the dead one there I
 loved ?
 And how shall I deck my song for the large sweet soul that
 has gone ?
 And what shall my perfume be, for the grave of him I love ?
¹⁵ Sea-winds, blown from east and west,
 Blown from the eastern sea, and blown from the western sea,
 till there on the prairies meeting :
 These, and with these, and the breath of my chant,
 I perfume the grave of him I love.

11

16 O what shall I hang on the chamber walls ?
 And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls,
 To adorn the burial-house of him I love ?

17 Pictures of growing spring, and farms, and homes,
 With the Fourth-month eve at sundown, and the gray-smoke
 lucid and bright,
 With floods of the yellow gold of the gorgeous, indolent,
 sinking sun, burning, expanding the air ;
 With the fresh sweet herbage under foot, and the pale green
 leaves of the trees prolific ;
 In the distance the flowing glaze, the breast of the river,
 with a wind-dapple here and there ;
 With ranging hills on the banks, with many a line against
 the sky, and shadows ;
 And the city at hand, with dwellings so dense, and stacks
 of chimneys,
 And all the scenes of life, and the workshops, and the
 workmen homeward returning.

12

18 Lo ! body and soul ! this land !
 Mighty Manhattan, with spires, and the sparkling and hur-
 rying tides, and the ships ;
 The varied and ample land—the South and the North in
 the light—Ohio's shores, and flashing Missouri,
 And ever the far-spreading prairies, cover'd with grass and
 corn.

19 Lo ! the most excellent sun, so calm and haughty ;
 The violet and purple morn, with just-felt breezes :
 The gentle, soft-born, measureless light ;
 The miracle, spreading, bathing all—the fulfill'd noon ;
 The coming eve, delicious—the welcome night, and the
 stars,
 Over my cities shining all, enveloping man and land.

13

²⁰ Sing on ! sing on, you gray-brown bird !
 Sing from the swamps, the recesses—pour your chant from
 the bushes ;
 Limitless out of the dusk, out of the cedars and pines.

²¹ Sing on, dearest brother—warble your reedy song ;
 Loud human song, with voice of uttermost woe.

²² O liquid, and free, and tender !
 O wild and loose to my soul ! O wondrous singer !
 You only I hear yet the star holds me, (but will soon
 depart ;)
 Yet the lilac, with mastering odor, holds me.

14

²³ Now while I sat in the day, and look'd forth,
 In the close of the day, with its light, and the fields of
 spring, and the farmer preparing his crops,
 In the large unconscious scenery of my land, with its lakes
 and forests,
 In the heavenly aerial beauty, (after the perturb'd winds,
 and the storms ;)
 Under the arching heavens of the afternoon swift passing,
 and the voices of children and women,
 The many-moving sea-tides,—and I saw the ships how they
 sail'd,
 And the summer approaching with richness, and the fields
 all busy with labor,
 And the infinite separate houses, how they all went on, each
 with its meals and minutia of daily usages ;
 And the streets, how their throbbings throb'd, and the cities
 pent,—lo ! then and there,
 Falling among them all, and upon them all, enveloping me
 with the rest,
 Appear'd the cloud, appear'd the long black trail ;
 And I knew Death, its thought, and the sacred knowledge
 of death.

15

24 Then with the knowledge of death as walking one side of
me,
And the thought of death close-walking the other side of me,
And I in the middle, as with companions, and as holding the
hands of companions,
I fled forth to the hiding receiving night, that talks not,
Down to the shores of the water, the path by the swamp in
the dimness,
To the solemn shadowy cedars, and ghostly pines so still.

25 And the singer so shy to the rest receiv'd me ;
The gray-brown bird I know, receiv'd us comrades three ;
And he sang what seem'd the song of death, and a verse for
him I love.

26 From deep secluded recesses,
From the fragrant cedars, and the ghostly pines so still,
Came the singing of the bird.

27 And the charm of the singing rapt me,
As I held, as if by their hands, my comrades in the night ;
And the voice of my spirit tallied the song of the bird.

16

28 Come, lovely and soothing Death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later, delicate Death.

29 Prais'd be the fathomless universe,
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious ;
And for love, sweet love—But praise ! O praise and praise,
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding Death.

30 Dark Mother, always gliding near, with soft feet,
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome ?

Then I chant it for thee—I glorify thee above all ;
 I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come
 unfalteringly.

³¹ Approach, encompassing Death—strong Deliveress !
 When it is so—when thou hast taken them, I joyously sing
 the dead,
 Lost in the loving, floating ocean of thee,
 Laved in the flood of thy bliss, O Death.

³² From me to thee glad serenades,
 Dances for thee I propose, saluting thee—adornments and
 feastings for thee ;
 And the sights of the open landscape, and the high-spread
 sky, are fitting,
 And life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful night.

³³ The night, in silence, under many a star ;
 The ocean shore, and the husky whispering wave, whose
 voice I know ;
 And the soul turning to thee, O vast and well-veil'd Death,
 And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.

³⁴ Over the tree-tops I float thee a song !
 Over the rising and sinking waves—over the myriad fields,
 and the prairies wide ;
 Over the dense-pack'd cities all, and the teeming wharves
 and ways,
 I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee, O Death !

³⁵ To the tally of my soul,
 Loud and strong kept up the gray-brown bird,
 With pure, deliberate notes, spreading, filling the night.

³⁶ Loud in the pines and cedars dim,
 Clear in the freshness moist, and the swamp-perfume ;
 And I with my comrades there in the night.

37 While my sight that was bound in my eyes unclosed,
As to long panoramas of visions.

18

38 I saw the vision of armies;
And I saw, as in noiseless dreams, hundreds of battle-flags;
Borne through the smoke of the battles, and pierc'd with
missiles, I saw them,
And carried hither and yon through the smoke, and torn
and bloody;
And at last but a few shreds of the flags left on the staffs,
(and all in silence,)
And the staffs all splinter'd and broken.

39 I saw battle-corpses, myriads of them,
And the white skeletons of young men—I saw them;
I saw the debris and debris of all dead soldiers;
But I saw they were not as was thought;
They themselves were fully at rest—they suffer'd not;
The living remain'd and suffer'd—the mother suffer'd,
And the wife and the child, and the musing comrade suffer'd,
And the armies that remain'd suffer'd.

19

40 Passing the visions, passing the night;
Passing, unloosing the hold of my comrades' hands;
Passing the song of the hermit bird, and the tallying song
of my soul,
Victorious song, death's outlet song, (yet varying, ever-
altering song,
As low and wailing, yet clear the notes, rising and falling,
flooding the night,
Sadly sinking and fainting, as warning and warning, and
yet again bursting with joy,)
Covering the earth, and filling the spread of the heaven,
As that powerful psalm in the night I heard from recesses.

20

41 Must I leave thee, lilac with heart-shaped leaves?
Must I leave thee there in the door-yard, blooming, return-
ing with spring?

42 Must I pass from my song for thee;
From my gaze on thee in the west, fronting the west, com-
muning with thee,
O comrade lustrous, with silver face in the night?

21

43 Yet each I keep, and all;
The song, the wondrous chant of the gray-brown bird, I keep,
And the tallying chant, the echo arous'd in my soul, I keep,
With the lustrous and drooping star, with the countenance
full of woe;
With the lilac tall, and its blossoms of mastering odor;
Comrades mine, and I in the midst, and their memory ever
I keep—for the dead I loved so well;
For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands...
and this for his dear sake;
Lilac and star and bird, twined with the chant of my soul,
With the holders holding my hand, nearing the call of the
bird,
There in the fragrant pines, and the cedars dusk and dim.



RACE OF VETERANS.

RACE of veterans!

Race of the soil, ready for conflict! race of the conquering
march!

(No more credulity's race, abiding-temper'd race;)

Race owning no law but the law of itself;

Race of passion and the storm.

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!



1

O CAPTAIN! my captain! our fearful trip is done ;
 The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is
 won ;
 The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
 While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring :
 But O heart! heart! heart!
 Leave you not the little spot,
 Where on the deck my captain lies,
 Fallen cold and dead.

2

O captain! my captain! rise up and hear the bells ;
 Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills ;
 For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores
 a-crowding ;
 For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces
 turning ;
 O captain! dear father!
 This arm I push beneath you ;
 It is some dream that on the deck,
 You've fallen cold and dead.

3

My captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still ;
 My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will :
 But the ship, the ship is anchor'd safe, its voyage closed and
 done ;
 From fearful trip, the victor ship, comes in with object won :
 Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells !
 But I, with silent tread,
 Walk the spot my captain lies,
 Fallen cold and dead.

SPIRIT WHOSE WORK IS DONE.



SPIRIT whose work is done ! spirit of dreadful hours !
 Ere, departing, fade from my eyes your forests of bayonets ;
 Spirit of gloomiest fears and doubts, (yet onward ever unfal-
 tering pressing ;)
 Spirit of many a solemn day, and many a savage scene !
 Electric spirit !
 That with muttering voice, through the years now closed,
 like a tireless phantom flitted,
 Rousing the land with breath of flame, while you beat and
 beat the drum ;
 —Now, as the sound of the drum, hollow and harsh to the
 last, reverberates round me ;
 As your ranks, your immortal ranks, return, return from
 the battles ;
 While the muskets of the young men yet lean over their
 shoulders ;
 While I look on the bayonets bristling over their shoulders ;
 While those slanted bayonets, whole forests of them, ap-
 pearing in the distance, approach and pass on, re-
 turning homeward,
 Moving with steady motion, swaying to and fro, to the right
 and left,
 Evenly, lightly rising and falling, as the steps keep time :
 —Spirit of hours I knew, all hectic red one day, but pale as
 death next day ;
 Touch my mouth, ere you depart—press my lips close !
 Leave me your pulses of rage ! bequeath them to me ! fill
 me with currents convulsive !
 Let them scorch and blister out of my chants, when you are
 gone ;
 Let them identify you to the future in these songs.

CHANTING THE SQUARE DEIFIC.



1

CHANTING the square deific, out of the One advancing, out
 of the sides ;
 Out of the old and new—out of the square entirely divine,
 Solid, four-sided, (all the sides needed) ... from this side
 JEHOVAH am I,
 Old Brahm I, and I Saturnius am ;
 Not Time affects me—I am Time, modern as any ;
 Unpersuadable, relentless, executing righteous judgments ;
 As the Earth, the Father, the brown old Kronos, with laws,
 Aged beyond computation—yet ever new—ever with those
 mighty laws rolling,
 Relentless, I forgive no man—whoever sins, dies—I will
 have that man's life ;
 Therefore let none expect mercy—Have the seasons, gravi-
 tation, the appointed days, mercy?—No more have I ;
 But as the seasons, and gravitation—and as all the appointed
 days, that forgive not,
 I dispense from this side judgments inexorable, without the
 least remorse.

2

Consolator most mild, the promis'd one advancing,
 With gentle hand extended, the mightier God am I,
 Foretold by prophets and poets, in their most rapt proph-
 ecies and poems ;
 From this side, lo! the Lord CHRIST gazes—lo! Hermes I—
 lo! mine is Hercules' face ;
 All sorrow, labor, suffering, I, tallying it, absorb in myself ;
 Many times have I been rejected, taunted, put in prison,
 and crucified—and many times shall be again ;
 All the world have I given up for my dear brothers' and
 sisters' sake—for the soul's sake ;

Wending my way through the homes of men, rich or
 poor, with the kiss of affection ;
 For I am affection—I am the cheer-bringing God, with hope,
 and all-enclosing Charity ;
 (Conqueror yet—for before me all the armies and soldiers
 of the earth shall yet bow—and all the weapons of
 war become impotent :)
 With indulgent words, as to children—with fresh and sane
 words, mine only ;
 Young and strong I pass, knowing well I am destin'd my-
 self to an early death :
 But my Charity has no death—my Wisdom dies not, neither
 early nor late,
 And my sweet Love, bequeath'd here and elsewhere, never
 dies.

3

Aloof, dissatisfied, plotting revolt,
 Comrade of criminals, brother of slaves,
 Crafty, despised, a drudge, ignorant,
 With sudra face and worn brow—black, but in the depths
 of my heart, proud as any ;
 Lifted, now and always, against whoever, scorning, assumes
 to rule me ;
 Morose, full of guile, full of reminiscences, brooding, with
 many wiles,
 (Though it was thought I was baffled and dispell'd, and
 my wiles done—but that will never be ;)
 Defiant, I, SATAN, still live—still utter words—in new lands
 duly appearing, (and old ones also ;)
 Permanent here, from my side, warlike, equal with any,
 real as any,
 Nor time, nor change, shall ever change me or my words.

4

Santa SPIRITA, breather, life,
 Beyond the light, lighter than light,
 Beyond the flames of hell—joyous, leaping easily above hell ;

Beyond Paradise—perfumed solely with mine own perfume ;
 Including all life on earth—touching, including God—
 including Saviour and Satan ;
 Ethereal, pervading all, (for without me, what were all ?
 what were God ?)
 Essence of forms—life of the real identities, permanent,
 positive, (namely the unseen,)
 Life of the great round world, the sun and stars, and of
 man—I, the general Soul,
 Here the square finishing, the solid, I the most solid,
 Breathe my breath also through these little songs.



I HEARD YOU, SOLEMN-SWEET PIPES OF THE ORGAN.

I HEARD you, solemn-sweet pipes of the organ, as last
 Sunday morn I pass'd the church ;
 Winds of autumn!—as I walk'd the woods at dusk, I
 heard your long-stretch'd sighs, up above, so
 mournful ;
 I heard the perfect Italian tenor, singing at the opera—I
 heard the soprano in the midst of the quartet singing ;
 ... Heart of my love!—you too I heard, murmuring low,
 through one of the wrists around my head ;
 Heard the pulse of you, when all was still, ringing little
 bells last night under my ear.



NOT MY ENEMIES EVER INVADE ME.

NOT my enemies ever invade me—no harm to my pride from
 them I fear ;
 But the lovers I recklessly love—lo! how they master me!
 Lo! me, ever open and helpless, bereft of my strength!
 Utterly abject, grovelling on the ground before them.

O ME! O LIFE!

O ME! O life! ... of the questions of these recurring ;
 Of the endless trains of the faithless—of cities fill'd with
 the foolish ;
 Of myself forever reproaching myself, (for who more fool-
 ish than I, and who more faithless?)
 Of eyes that vainly crave the light—of the objects mean—of
 the struggle ever renew'd ;
 Of the poor results of all—of the plodding and sordid crowds
 I see around me ;
 Of the empty and useless years of the rest—with the rest me
 intertwined ;
 The question, O me! so sad, recurring—What good amid
 these, O me, O life ?

Answer.

That you are here—that life exists, and identity ;
 That the powerful play goes on, and you will contribute a
 verse.



AH POVERTIES, WINCINGS, AND SULKY RETREATS.

AH poverties, wincings, and sulky retreats !
 Ah you foes that in conflict have overcome me !
 (For what is my life, or any man's life, but a conflict with
 foes—the old, the incessant war?)
 You degradations—you tussle with passions and appetites ;
 You smarts from dissatisfied friendships, (ah wounds, the
 sharpest of all ;)
 You toil of painful and choked articulations—you mean-
 nesses ;
 You shallow tongue-talks at tables, (my tongue the shal-
 lowest of any ;)
 You broken resolutions, you racking angers, you smother'd
 ennui ;
 Ah, think not you finally triumph—My real self has yet to
 come forth ;
 It shall yet march forth o'er-mastering, till all lies beneath me ;
 It shall yet stand up the soldier of unquestion'd victory.

AS I LAY WITH MY HEAD IN YOUR LAP,
CAMERADO.

As I lay with my head in your lap, camerado,
The confession I made I resume—what I said to you and
the open air I resume :
I know I am restless, and make others so ;
I know my words are weapons, full of danger, full of death ;
(Indeed I am myself the real soldier ;
It is not he, there, with his bayonet, and not the red-striped
artilleryman ;)
For I confront peace, security, and all the settled laws, to
unsettle them ;
I am more resolute because all have denied me, than I could
ever have been had all accepted me ;
I heed not, and have never heeded, either experience, cau-
tions, majorities, nor ridicule ;
And the threat of what is call'd hell is little or nothing to
me ;
And the lure of what is call'd heaven is little or nothing
to me ;
... Dear camerado ! I confess I have urged you onward
with me, and still urge you, without the least idea
what is our destination,
Or whether we shall be victorious, or utterly quell'd and
defeated.



THIS DAY, O SOUL.

This day, O soul, I give you a wondrous mirror ;
Long in the dark, in tarnish and cloud it lay—But the cloud
has pass'd, and the tarnish gone ;
... Behold, O soul ! it is now a clean and bright mirror,
Faithfully showing you all the things of the world.

IN CLOUDS DESCENDING, IN MIDNIGHT SLEEP.

1

IN clouds descending, in midnight sleep, of many a face of
 anguish,
 Of the look at first of the mortally wounded—of that inde-
 scribable look;
 Of the dead on their backs, with arms extended wide,
 I dream, I dream, I dream.

2

Of scenes of nature, the fields and the mountains;
 Of the skies, so beauteous after the storm—and at night the
 moon so unearthly bright,
 Shining sweetly, shining down, where we dig the trenches
 and gather the heaps,
 I dream, I dream, I dream.

3

Long have they pass'd, long lapsed—faces and trenches and
 fields;
 Long through the carnage I moved with a callous compos-
 ure—or away from the fallen,
 Onward I sped at the time—But now of their forms at night,
 I dream, I dream, I dream.



AN ARMY ON THE MARCH.

WITH its cloud of skirmishers in advance,
 With now the sound of a single shot, snapping like a whip,
 and now an irregular volley,
 The swarming ranks press on and on, the dense brigades
 press on;
 Glittering dimly, toiling under the sun, the dust-cover'd men,
 In columns rise and fall to the undulations of the ground,
 With artillery interspers'd—the wheels rumble, the horses
 sweat,
 As the army resistless advances.

DIRGE FOR TWO VETERANS.

1

THE last sunbeam
Lightly falls from the finish'd Sabbath,
On the pavement here—and there beyond, it is looking,
Down a new-made double grave.

2

Lo! the moon ascending!
Up from the east, the silvery round moon;
Beautiful over the house-tops, ghastly, phantom moon;
Immense and silent moon.

3

I see a sad procession,
And I hear the sound of coming full-key'd bugles;
All the channels of the city streets they're flooding,
As with voices and with tears.

4

I hear the great drums pounding,
And the small drums steady whirring;
And every blow of the great convulsive drums,
Strikes me through and through.

5

For the son is brought with the father;
(In the foremost ranks of the fierce assault they fell;
Two veterans, son and father, dropt together,
And the double grave awaits them.)

6

Now nearer blow the bugles,
And the drums strike more convulsive;
And the day-light o'er the pavement quite has faded,
And the strong dead-march enwraps me.

7

In the eastern sky up-buoying,
 The sorrowful vast phantom moves illumin'd;
 ('Tis some mother's large, transparent face,
 In heaven brighter growing.)

8

O strong dead-march, you please me!
 O moon immense, with your silvery face you soothe me!
 O my soldiers twain! O my veterans, passing to burial!
 What I have I also give you.

9

The moon gives you light,
 And the bugles and the drums give you music;
 And my heart, O my soldiers, my veterans,
 My heart gives you love.



HOW SOLEMN, AS ONE BY ONE.

How solemn, as one by one,
 As the ranks returning, all worn and sweaty—as the men
 file by where I stand;
 As the faces, the masks appear—as I glance at the faces,
 studying the masks;
 (As I glance upward out of this page, studying you, dear
 friend, whoever you are;)
 How solemn the thought of my whispering soul, to each in
 the ranks, and to you;
 I see behind each mask, that wonder, a kindred soul:
 O the bullet could never kill what you really are, dear
 friend,
 Nor the bayonet stab what you really are:
 ... The soul! yourself I see, great as any, good as the best,
 Waiting secure and content, which the bullet could never
 kill,
 Nor the bayonet stab, O friend!

LO! VICTRESS ON THE PEAKS!

Lo! Victress on the peaks!

Where thou standest, with mighty brow, regarding the
world,

(The world, O Libertad, that vainly conspired against thee;)
Out of its countless, beleaguering toils, after thwarting
them all;

Where thou, dominant, with the dazzling sun around thee,
Towerest now unharmed, in immortal soundness and bloom—
lo! in this hour supreme,

No poem proud I, chanting, bring to thee—nor mastery's
rapturous verse;

But a little book, containing night's darkness, and blood-
dripping wounds,

And psalms of the dead.



RECONCILIATION.

WORD over all, beautiful as the sky!

Beautiful that war, and all its deeds of carnage, must in
time be utterly lost;

That the hands of the sisters Death and Night, incessantly
softly wash again, and ever again, this soil'd world:

... For my enemy is dead—a man divine as myself is dead;

I look where he lies, white-faced and still, in the coffin—I
draw near;

I bend down and touch lightly with my lips the white face
in the coffin.

TO THE LEAVEN'D SOIL THEY TROD.

To the leaven'd soil they trod, calling, I sing, for the last ;
 (Not cities, nor man alone, nor war, nor the dead,
 But forth from my tent emerging for good—loosing, unty-
 ing the tent-ropes ;)
 In the freshness, the forenoon air, in the far-stretching cir-
 cuits and vistas, again to peace restored,
 To the fiery fields emanative, and the endless vistas beyond—
 to the south and the north ;
 To the leaven'd soil of the general western world, to attest
 my songs,
 (To the average earth, the wordless earth, witness of war
 and peace,)
 To the Alleghanian hills, and the tireless Mississippi,
 To the rocks I, calling, sing, and all the trees in the woods,
 To the plain of the poems of heroes, to the prairie spreading
 wide,
 To the far-off sea, and the unseen winds, and the sane im-
 palpable air ;
 ... And responding, they answer all, (but not in words.)
 The average earth, the witness of war and peace, acknowl-
 edges mutely ;
 The prairie draws me close, as the father, to bosom broad,
 the son ;
 The Northern ice and rain, that began me, nourish me
 to the end ;
 But the hot sun of the South is to ripen my songs.

FINIS.

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